

This translation has been as literal as possible adding in the scriptures in both the Catholic and the Protestant Bibles as noted together for reference; so all may enjoy and grow from God's gift to us. - Peter-John Parisis.

**Notes from some of the help received during final editing.**

Two very fine Ladies at the Ohio Wesleyan University Staff in Delaware, Ohio has given much in helping my research on Madame Guyon. They are: **CAROL H. HOLLIGER AND HILDA WICK** – my deepest Thank-You.

**Matthew B. Sellers** (from Riverside, California) comments:

"The writings of Madame Guyon have been the single-most influential thing in my spiritual life, other than the Bible. At the beginning of my born-again experience, I was fortunate enough to receive a copy of Guyon's book, "Experiencing the depths of Jesus Christ" as my very first Christian devotional. Needless to say, that little event, brought about by divine providence, changed my relationship with God forever. From that point on, the Holy Spirit would use her writings to mentor me into the deep things of God. "The Justifications", written in the 1700's and only recently translated from the original French is one such book. I find this 3-volume piece to be most complete, in-depth work ever penned by Madame Guyon on the inner life."

**Barbara Weinstein** (from Coxsackie, New York) comments:

"I was born. I was born again. I was introduced to Madame Guyon. I can now proclaim that truly, Jesus is my Lord. Truly, God IS Love. And I am filled to overflowing!"

**AND THANKS FOR THE MAN WHO MOTIVATED ME WITH A SIMPLE QUESTION IN FINISHING THE BOOK**

**FRED SCHNEIDER – FROM DEXTER, MICHIGAN.**

**"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."**

**(James 4:8 KJV)**

THE JUSTIFICATIONS  
OF MADAME J.M.B. DE LA MOTHE-GUION  
WRITTEN BY HERSELF,  
AND SENT TO THE BISHOPS  
HER EXAMINERS  
WHERE SEVERAL DIFFICULTIES  
WHICH REGARD  
THE LIFE INTERIOR  
ARE ILLUMINATED  
IN THESE THREE VOLUMES  
**VOLUME ONE**

AT COLOGNE – JEAN DE LA PIERRE, 1720  
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH, 1992  
TRANSLATORS: PETER-JOHN PARISIS & CHRISTOPHER  
P. COTY

EDITOR: PETER-JOHN PARISIS, (BRYAN EDWIN DEAN)

SELF-PUBLISHED

This Translation of THE JUSTIFICATIONS

Is

Dedicated to:

In Loving Memory of:

Pastor Harry Cummings of Linden, Michigan  
**Harry Walter Dean of Linden, Michigan (my Father)**  
**Margaret Lenore Keely Dean (my Mother)**

Help has been greatly appreciated by:  
Lawrence & Scottie Velvin of Virginia  
My Cousin Beverly Jean Dean

**May God and God alone receive all the glory!**  
**All My Love to you God.**

## MADAME GUION (GUYON)

Madame Guyon (1648 – 1717) it is reported that she composed this work in fifty days, and apparently to the Bishop of Meaux. She was in prison for her writings of *Short and Easy Method of Prayer*. This book along with her commentary on Song of Solomon was used to mistreat this woman of God. History has prevailed to show that Madame Guyon's death in prison was to God's glory. For her writings on drawing closer to God have been in print from the time she penned them.

*The Justifications* has never been translated out of the French language until now. Here for the first time in English are many ancient brothers and sisters of Christ's writings! Even St. John's best friend, St. Dennis is quoted (some of his letters to St. John while he was exiled to the island of Patmos; where St. John wrote the book in the New Testament; *Apocalypse* (in the Douay Rheims version or *Revelations* King James Version).

Madame Jeanne Guyon is probably the best-known historical woman figure of the church (several books about her life are available). For over 300 years men of God have not only read her writings but also translated them and gave them to new converts! Brothers such as Hudson Taylor, John Wesley, Fenelon, Count Zinzendorf, Watchman Nee, Thomas Upham, and many more. Godly men women have recommended her writings to other believers as a tool to draw closer to God. Few people in Church history have influenced so many lives and spiritual movements as these writings of Madame Guyon (Guion).

List of Books From Madame Guyon (In the Original French)

1. Les Torrents Spirituels (Spiritual Torrents) - 1682
2. La Vie de Madame J.M.B. de la Mothe Guion, écrite par elle-même, qui contient toutes les expériences de la vie intérieure, depuis ses commencemens jusqu'à la plus haute consommation, avec toutes les directions relatives (The Life of Madame Guyon) - 1709, 1720, 1791, 3 volumes
3. Moyen court et tres facile pour l'oraison (Guyon's way of prayer) - 1685
4. Commentaire de Cantique des Cantiques de Salomon (Commentary on the Song of Songs of Solomon) - 1688
5. Les Justifications de la doctrine de Madame de la Mothe-Guion, Pleinement eclaircie, demontree & autorisee par les Sts. Peres Grecs, Latins & Auteurs canonises ou approuves; ecrites par elle-meme. Avec un examen de la neuvieme & dixieme Conferences de Cassien sur l'etat fixe de l'oraison continuelle. Par Mr. de Fenelon, Archeveque de Cambray. Paris [i.e. Lausanne]: Libraires Associes [i.e. Henri Vincent] - 1693, 1720, 1790.. 3 Bde. VIII, XVI, 432; [2], 379, [2]; [2], 432 S
6. Oeuvres de madame de La Mothe-Guion (Complete Works of Madame Guyon's writings) - 1767-68 & 1790-9, 39 volumes
7. Poésies et cantiques spirituels sur divers sujets qui regardent la vie intérieure: ou, L'esprit du vrai christianisme / par Mme. J. M. B. de La Mothe-Guyon - 1722, 1790, 4 volumes
8. La sainte bible: avec des explications & reflexions qui regardent la vie interieure / par Madam J. M. B. de la Mothe-Guyon - 1713-1715, 1790, 20 volumes
9. Lettres chretiennes et spirituelles sur divers Sujets qui regardent la vie interieure, ou l'esprit du vrai christianisme. Nouvelle ed., Enrichie de la Correspondance secrette de Mr. de Fenelon avec l'Auteur - 1767-1768. 5 volumes: XLIII, 694; 623; IX, 636; XVI, 624; CLX, 630
10. L'ame amante de son Dieu, representee dans les emblemes de Hermannus Hugo, et dans ceux d'Othon Vaenius sur l'Amour divin. Avec des Figures nouvelles [par F.G. Wexelberg], accompagnees de Vers qui en font l'application aux dispositions les plus essentielles de la Vie interieure. Paris [i.e. Lausanne?]: Libraires Associes [i.e. Henri Vincent?] - 1790. , 188 pages.
11. Discours chretiens et spirituels sur divers sujets qui regardent la vie interieure, tires la plupart de la Ste. Ecriture. Paris [i.e. Lausanne]: Libraires Associes [i.e. Henri Vincent] - 1790. Nouvelle ed., corrigee et augmentee. 2 Bde. 495; 430 S.
12. Recueil de divers traitez de theologie mystique, qui entrent dans la ... dispute du quie'tisme qui s'agite presentement en France. Contenant I. Le moyen court et tre`s-facile de faire oraison. II. L'Explication du Cantique des Cantiques [with the text in Latin and French.] Tous deux par Madame G. III. L'E'loge, les Maximes Spirituelles et quelques Lettres du Fr. Laurent de la Re'surrection. IV. Les moeurs et entretiens du me^me Fr. Laurent, et sa pratique de l'exercice de la presence de Dieu. Avec une pre'face ou` l'on voit beaucoup de particularitez de la vie de Madame G. [The whole published by P. Poiret.] GUYON. Jeanne Marie  
Cologne - 1699
13. Opuscules Spirituels. Nouvelle e'dition, augmente'e de son ... Traite' des Torrents, et d'une preface ge'ne'rale touchant sa personne, sa doctrine, et les oppositions qu'on leur a suscite'es.  
GUYON. Jeanne Marie  
Cologne - 1704, 1720, 1790

## History of the English translator/publisher

Peter-John Parisis (November 24, 1992)

My birth name was Bryan Edwin Dean and I was born on September 29, 1960 at 8:59 P.M. in Flint Michigan. I am the third son to my father, Harry Walter Dean, who was 45 upon my birth. My Mother, Margaret Lenore Keely Dean was 42 when she gave birth to her youngest child of five; Bryan. The siblings are as followed: Nancy Lenore Dean Perry, Harry Oliver "Butch" Dean (died at 12 from Polo), Mark Allen Dean, and Beth Ann Dean Evitts (born April 23, 1959, died March 6, 2006 – leaving behind her 2 children: Betty Jo Evitts & Jeremy Evitts {and 3 grandchildren}).

My father is one of eleven children (Herbert, Mervill, Harry, Marshal, Paul Albert, Maude, Naomi, Luella, Anabel, Josephine Rose, Jessie) born to the Free Methodist Minister and Tool & Die Maker in the Chevrolet plant in Flint; Herbert La-Fayette Dean and Typhena Pearl Edwards Dean his wife of the Flint, Michigan area. My mother is the eldest of four children (Margaret, Beverly, Arlene, Leona) to her father, Oliver Edwin Keely and his wife Frances Lenore Boomer Keely. My Grandfather Keely was killed while working in the Buick Automobile Plant in Flint, Michigan.

On my father's side, we are direct descents from Daniel Tourneur (from Picardie, France born in 1626) and Jacqueline de Parisis (from Leyden, France born September 5, 1650) and came to the New World and settled in New Harlem, New York. The family history is well documented in the family Bible. The family history shows many different last names as the generations passed.

On November 24, 1992, with permission from my Mother (my father went to Heaven in 1987) I legally changed my name to Peter-John Parisis. This name reflects my family origin and did not seal my birth certificate so I legally have two names. At this point the only name I used away from family and my hometown of Linden, Michigan; is Peter-John Parisis.

The reason for the name change was to gain historical perspective and due to the reason that I did not like my birth name. This should clear up any questions about who I am.

### **Family Tree is as followed:**

1. Daniel Tourneur (of Picardie, France 1626, died 1673 in Harlem, New York) married Jacqueline de Parisis (born about 1626, died 1700) in Leyden, Holland on September 5, 1650 (Daniel Tourneur was a French Huguenot who had taken up refuge in Holland due to religious sake and became one of the original members to whom the Corporation of New Amsterdam issued patents for land in Harlem, New York). They gave birth to Esther Tourneur (born about 1659 in Harlem, New York) whom married Frederick DeVeaux on June 24, 1677. They give birth to Frederick DeVeaux (1684) whom married Hester Dyckman in 1709. They gave birth to Frederick DeVeaux in 1710 whom married Jane Doty in 1754 in Westchester, New York {Page 425 of the New Harlem, New York Register}. They gave birth to Mary Devoe in 1768 whom married Hendrick Brown in 1790. They gave birth to Maria Brown (born December 7, 1794) whom married Leonard Dean Sr. on December 25, 1818 {Page 446 of the New Harlem, New York Register}. They gave birth to Leonard Dean Jr. (in Mindham Washington, Co., New York on April 28, 1821) whom married Mary Elizabeth Lee at Frankfort, New York on January 29, 1843. They gave birth to Reginald Mervill Dean (born January 1, 1852) whom married Marrietta Goodenough in Tonawanda, New York in 1881. They gave birth to Herbert LaFayette Dean (in Tonawanda, Erie Co., New York on August 25, 1885) whom married Typhena Pearl Edwards (born in Saginaw, Michigan on April 12, 1884) November 25, 1903 in Saginaw, Michigan. They gave birth to Harry Walter Dean (born on April 10, 1915) whom married Margaret Lenore Keely (born on October 26, 1918). They gave birth to Bryan Edwin Dean on September 29, 1960 (name changed to Peter-John Parisis).

2. Laurens Jansen Low (born in 1651 in Leerdam, Holland) married Mary Roosa in 1672 {Page 45 of the New Herlem, New York Register}. They gave birth to Albert Low (born on November 11, 1676) whom married Susannah Delamater on October 2, 1702. They gave birth to Marytje (Maria) Low (born on September 15, 1703) whom married Hendrick Pettinger (about 1725). They gave birth to Sophia Pettinger (born on

September 3, 1742 in Somerset Co., New Jersey and moved to Amherstburg, Ontario, Canada in 1774) whom married Isaac Smally on October 20, 1764. They gave birth to John Edwards (born 1770, in Virginia) whom married Sarah Smally (born on October 11, 1782) in Canada, Providence of Ontario. They gave birth to John Medrith Edwards (born on April 27, 1814) whom married Eleanor Roland on March 21, 1836. They gave birth to Hugh Frederick Edwards (born on June 5, 1841) whom married Typhena Toll (born on March 12, 1845 in Raleigh Township, Co. Kent, Ontario, Canada {Great Grandma Typhena Toll Edwards is the daughter of Henry Toll and Tryphena Chapman (born on December 1, 1807) whom married on May 23, 1823. Great Great Grandma Tryphena Chapman Toll is the daughter of Abraham Chapman and Tryphena Malcolm (born in 1781 in St. Andrew, N B Canada; the 4<sup>th</sup> of 15 children) whom married before July 21, 1806. Great Great Great Grandma Tryphena Malcolm Chapman is the daughter of Finly Malcolm and Tryphena Wardwell (born 1761 in York; the 4<sup>th</sup> child of 9, Maine, and died June 16, 1813 in buried in Oakland Pioneer Cemetery, Oakland, Ontario, Canada). Great Great Great Great Grandma Tryphena Wardwell Malcolm is the daughter of Daniel Wardwell Senior (born April 17, 1734 in York Maine, died January 7, 1803 at Penobscot, Maine) [Daniel is the youngest of 11 children born to Eliakim Wardwell Senior (born August 17, 1687 at Andover, Essex, Massachusetts, died October 16, 1753 at York, Maine) whom married Ruth Bragdon (born on April 9, 1691 in York, Maine, died after 1754 in Old Kittery, Maine) before 1734. Eliakim Wardwell Senior is the 3<sup>rd</sup> child of 6 to Samuel Thomas Wardwell Senior (born May 16, 1643, died on September 22, 1692 in Salem, Essex, Maine by Hanging (Samuel was tried, convicted, and the last man to hang at the Salem Witch Trials in Salem, Massachusetts) whom married Sarah Hooper Hawkes (born on December 7, 1650 in Reading, Massachusetts, died 1711 in Andover, Essex, Massachusetts.) date of marriage unknown. Samuel Thomas Wardwell Senior is the youngest of 5 children born to Thomas Wardwell (born 1602, Lincolnshire, England, died December 10, 1643, Boston Massachusetts) whom married Elizabeth Woodroffe (born March 2, 1600/01 in Marchington, Stafford, England, died February 22, 1695/96 in Boston, Massachusetts) before 1643.] whom married Sarah Staples (born on April 4, 1773 in York, Maine, died September 23, 1817) on January 24, 1755.} whom married in 1776 in Castine, Hancock, Maine.) on October 21, 1863. They gave birth to Typhena Pearl Edwards (born on April 12, 1884, Saginaw, Michigan and died November 19, 1957 in Flint, Michigan) whom married Herbert LaFayette Dean (born on August 25, 1885) November 25, 1903 in Saginaw, Michigan. They gave birth to Harry Walter Dean (born on April 10, 1915) whom married Margaret Lenore Keely (born on October 26, 1918) on June 6, 1936. They gave birth to Bryan Edwin Dean on September 29, 1960 (name changed to Peter-John Parisis).

3. Moses Boomer (born 1845 in Canada) married Miss Garaphilia (date unknown) and they gave birth to John Boomer (born 1875 in Michigan and died 1949) married Hilda Lenor Lobdell. They gave birth to Francis Lenore Boomer on April 4, 1899 in Lakeview, Michigan (died June 20, 1960 in Flint, Michigan) whom married Oliver Edwin Keely (born February 16, 1897 in Essex Center, Canada, died April 23, 1931 while working at the Flint, Michigan's Buick Motors Automobile plant) on November 12, 1917 in Bay City, Michigan. They gave birth to Margaret Lenore Keely born on October 26, 1918) whom married Harry Walter Dean (born on April 10, 1915) on June 6, 1936. They gave birth to Bryan Edwin Dean on September 29, 1960 (name changed to Peter-John Parisis).

4. Charles O'Keely born in Clare C., Ireland is the father of Dennis Thomas Keely (born June 18, 1837 in Canada and died December 16, 1914). Dennis Thomas Keely married Sarah Jane Pinkett (born 1837 in Canada and died July 21, 1904). They gave birth to Thomas C. Keely (born on 1864 in Canada, died 1941) whom married Rhoda Ann Baker (born 1867 in England, died August 20, 1939). They gave birth to Oliver Edwin Keely (born on February 16, 1897 in Essex Center, Canada, died April 23, 1931 while working at the Flint, Michigan's Buick Motors Automobile plant) whom married Francis Lenore Boomer (April 4, 1899 in Lakeview, Michigan (died June 20, 1960 in Flint, Michigan) on November 12, 1917 in Bay City, Michigan. They gave birth to Margaret Lenore Keely born on October 26, 1918) whom married Harry Walter Dean (born on April 10, 1915) on June 6, 1936. They gave birth to Bryan Edwin Dean on September 29, 1960 (name changed to Peter-John Parisis).

\*\*\*Family History is derived by Family Documents from the Family Bible, New Halem's Register in New York and generous help from my Cousin Beverly Jean Dean (born on October 30, 1941 in Flint, Michigan). [Her mother is my mother's Sister (Beverly Doris Keely (born February 6, 1920 in Flint, Michigan, died August 20, 1981 in Flint, Michigan) whom married my father's brother Paul Albert Dean (born on January 9, 1917 in Flint, Michigan, died October 10, 1993 in Flint, Michigan) on September 30, 1938 in Flint, Michigan at Paul's home on Arizona Street and performed by Rev. Herbert Lafayette Dean.]

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- \*Albarado. (*The Art of Living Well.*)
- \*Albert the Great.
- \*Ambroise, St.
- \*Ambroise Florentin of the order of the Camaldules.
- \*Angela of Foligni, The Blessed
- Augustine, St. – (*Morals of the Church & On True Religion*).

**B**

- Barbancon, Constantine (*Secrets Paths of Divine Love*).
- \*Bartelemi of the Martyrs (Archbishop of Prague)
- \*Bede.
- \*Benoit, Justinian.
- \*Bernard, St.
- \*Blosius.
- \*Bonaventure, St.

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- \*Cajetan (Cardinal), (or Thomas of Vio)
- Canfeld (Benedict of) (*Rule of Perfection, Cassien Conferences*).
- Catherine of Genes, St.
- Chrysostome, John St.
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**E**

- Epiphane, Louis (Abbot of Estival) (*Mystic Conferences in Paris, 1676*).

**F**

- Francis of Sales, St. (*The Love of God*).

**G**

- \*Gerson.
- \*Gilbert (The Abbot) (*Canticle*, & Joined with works of St. Bernard).
- \*Gislerius. Michael (*Canticle*)
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**J**

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John of the Cross, The Blessed  
\*John of Jesus-Maria, Father  
John of St. Samson, Brother (*Works*; 2 volumes at Rennes 1658-1659)  
\*Jerome, St.  
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L  
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N  
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\*Rossignolius (*On the Perfection of Christian Discipline*)  
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\*Ruis of Montoya, Father  
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S  
\*Suarez  
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## PREFACE

1. **Reason for this Work, and plan of the Preface.** Everyone knows the infamous dispute of the late Archbishop of Cambria, Monsieur de Fenelon about pure love. But one does not perhaps know that Madame Guyon has been the innocent victim of blind zeal, of ambitious jealousy, or of the political views of the enemies of this illustrious Prelate. One of the means that they made use of to discredit the Doctrine of this great woman was, to represent Madame Guyon, with whom he always had a close relationship, as another Priscilla corrupted by the maxims of the false Quietism. In the time that the writings of this Lady were being scrutinized, she composed the work that is given to the public here, to show the conformity of her experiences, and of her expressions, with those of Authors canonized or approved by the Church.

To read this work with intelligence and benefit, it will perhaps be necessary to give a clear and simple idea of the Doctrine of the Mystics. For when it is spoken about, those who blaspheme what they ignore, regard it as a web of obscure terms and bizarre thoughts, which have no foundation, but in the excited imagination of feeble minds, or of visionary women.

2. **Substance of Mystic Theology:** To love God with all our heart, pray without ceasing, to bear our cross each day; here is the essential of Christian Morals, and at the same time the substance of Mystic Theology. The Gospel proposes Love as the accomplishment of the Law; continual Prayer and self-sacrifice as the two means to reach it.

3. **Pure Love;** God is loved sovereignly and uniquely because he is sovereignly and uniquely lovable. He loves all his creatures according to their participation more or less in his divine operations. The perfection of God is the rule of his love. Indeed the most perfect of accomplished wills, is without doubt that of infinite will. One may debate, one may clarify, one may refine as much as one wants the different motives of love, one will never deny, the supreme rule of love is to love God for himself and all things for him.

It is an immutable truth, founded on the idea that we have of the Infinite Being. It is the eternal and universal Religion of all Intellects. It is a duty to which the creature is obliged for all times, and in all places, even supposing that it must be destroyed after death, or that God has never accorded it any knowledge of his infinite perfection, other than that which we have of it during this life.

The hope of the Beatific Vision is without doubt a divine virtue, a legitimate motive for love, a source of infinite consolations, a powerful resource against all the temptations and miseries of our exile: but it is not pure Love (Charity). Scripture distinguishes these two virtues. One must never confuse them, nor reject chaste hope by recommending pure love.

What makes one believe that man is incapable of this perfect love is that his ability is judged by what he does, and not by what he must do. Men ordinarily act only by a principle of more or less refined self-love: and with our own forces we cannot act otherwise. As man is not the true light, which enlightens his spirit, neither is he the cause of the perfect love, which must animate his, will. Thus a power superior to him, must act in him without ceasing, in order to elevate him above himself and make him love according to the immutable (unchangeable) law of love.

4. **Prayer:** The first method for attaining this pure love (charity) is Prayer: and the most perfect Prayer is to passively receive the imprint of God, which carries us unceasingly toward himself. The Church attributes no other activity to the man in grace than that of consenting to or declining the divine action, which arouses and moves him. (*Conc. Trid. Session 6, Ct. 4*) It is God alone who is the moving force of the soul: but it can always yield to or resist the divine operation: and its most perfect cooperation is to let God act in it.

The aroused soul moved by grace must first make some effort, and develop multiple desires, and specific deeds in order to turn itself away from the creatures and to turn itself toward God: but after becoming accustomed for a long time to these frequent turnings, one acquires little by little the habit of living continually in the divine presence in a most simple, most intimate and most uniform manner. The Soul acts, but it is God alone who is the main spring of its action. It is he alone who moves it, who pushes it, who animates it, who trains it; but it freely follows that which attracts it. It is not inaction (idleness) nor a necessitated cooperation, but a free following of divine action. The more the soul delivers itself to it, the stronger and more vigorous this action becomes, like the movement of bodies, which increases in proportion to how far they fall toward their center.

That is the Evangelic Prayer that Madame Guyon calls in accordance with the Mystics, the Passive Prayer, the Prayer of Silence, of Repose, etc. It is neither a multitude of words, nor an exertion of thought, nor the enthusiasm of an excited imagination, but a commerce of the heart with God, of which the most simple are capable: It is not we who pray, it is the Holy Spirit which prays in us, which wails, which desires, which asks for us what we do not know how to ask for ourselves.

According to the stylus of the Holy Scripture all appears to be the action of God in man, to which man adds nothing but simple consent, or non-resistance.

**5. Abnegation (Self-Sacrifice):** In proportion to how much man unites himself in this way to God through prayer, he must remove himself from the creature and himself through Renouncement, which is the second method of reaching the divine union. The one is necessarily subsequent to the other.

This Evangelic Abnegation (Self-Sacrifice) is not an austerity which surpasses human strength, which destroys our health, and which causes us to lead an extraordinary life. Jesus Christ was not so austere. His life was completely common on the surface (exterior); but his interior was completely divine. The Renouncement that he proposes brings us not only to flee false pleasures, to combat our vulgar passions, to be contented with the simple things necessary to our state; but to stop all frivolous amusements, all activities of the mind, all the charms of the imagination; which serves only to distract us, and to entertain us in the taste of the created things. Evangelic Abnegation forbids us the slightest regard for the creature outside of God and the slightest return of vain self-satisfaction. It makes us love the lowest position although we may have been born into greatness, silence and interior solitude among noise and crowds, poverty of spirit and perfect detachment amid riches. That is not all. This abnegation (self-sacrifice) brings us to degrade the ego; such dear idol of man, to receive with joy that which crucifies him, to bear the imperfections of others with patience and gentleness, our own faults with humility and peace, the purifying rigors of divine Justice with abandon and flexibility (suppleness). Here is a universal penitence, a martyrdom of love, mortification, or rather a death, which is poured out onto all the senses, onto the mind, onto the heart, onto each man, and which leaves for refuge to the disordered love of the creatures or for oneself.

**6. Different states of the Life Interior: The First.** It is of this continual Prayer and this Evangelic Abnegation that all the mysteries of the life interior consist. The first operation of God is sensory, agreeable and full of charms. It brings the soul to act, to fight, to exert itself in the works of all active virtues and in an exterior mortification in order to detach itself from foreign objects. It is the foundation of the interior life, without which all spirituality must be suspect. In Prayer one tastes of a gentle unction and a savory delight. One is mortified with a noble and manly vigor. The soul sees its virtue, supports itself by its work, and is charmed by its courage.

**7. Different states of the Life Interior: The Second.** Next God begins another operation in it, where it is wholly passive, where it cooperates only by its abandon. It is a question of annihilating (destroying) the ego; and this is what God alone can do. No longer is it the soul which battles on the outside, it is God who attacks it through the inside to make it die to itself. He introduces himself into its heart. He shows it all the folds and creases of his fitting love. He unveils to it all the mysteries. It sees itself; it is horrified by what it sees. Everything in the soul is raised against it; it finds no more use in its former fervor, or in its own justice, with which he shows this soul all the impurities. It falls in collapse; it remains faithful without seeing his faithfulness. All that remains for it is the firm will to suffer a thousand deaths rather than displease God. Still the soul always has the consolation of seeing this will in itself. The action of God becoming more fundamental, more intimate, and more central; seems to disappear more and more; but it is not any less real from that. As this pure and universal light, which enlightens, which penetrates, and which moves each body, is itself imperceptible to our untrained eyes, or as self-love which is acting unceasingly in the natural man is not always distinguished; in the same way the action of the Word, which is the life, the light and the love of all minds, is acting in the super natural man in reality although in an imperceptible manner.

**8. Plan of God in his interior operations.** The plan of God in acting in this way is to hide his operation from our self-love, which no longer tastes of impure pleasures, of sensory objects, or vulgar passions, would establish a new empire upon our virtue themselves, would gratify itself with its own excellence, and would corrupt the divine action by an idolatry of self; which is dangerous, because it is refined. One would no longer sin as man, but one would sin as a Demon by pride and vain self-satisfaction. It is for this that the more advanced state of the spiritual life are filled only with temptation, with the pain of deprivation, drought, uncertain miseries, darkness, desolation, and interior suffering, until the empire of self-love is destroyed, and the reign of God, which is inside of us, is established in the soul.

**9. Third state or degree of spiritual Life.** So this tumultuous crowd of vague thought and disordered passions, which put the natural man into a perpetual frenzy: ceases. The mind is delivered from all its useless activities, the will of all its restless agitations, and the whole soul is reduced to a peace, to an emptiness, to a divine solitude, where the senses

and the imagination, the mind itself and the will itself are silenced, in order to listen to the eternal Wisdom, which speaks to the heart not through visions, nor through revelations, nor through sublime lights, nor through subtle speculations, but a language certainly more perfect and less subject to illusion; the All of God and the Nothingness of the Creature; and the profound homage that the Nothing owes to the All. So man no longer lives his own life, but Jesus Christ lives in him. He is reborn and becomes a child without spirit and without its own will. The Right of the Word becomes his sole light, and the love of the Holy Spirit is his sole love. His life is hidden with Jesus Christ in God and this new life takes the place of the old life of Adam. This is the Regeneration, which the Gospel speaks about.

These are the three States of the spiritual life that the Mystics call, Purgative, Illuminative, and Unitive, and that Madame Guyon names Active, Passive, and Divine, that is to say the renouncement of vulgar vices, the destruction of self-love, and the re-establishment of divine order by pure love.

**10. Solidity of the experiences and of the devotion of Madame Guyon.** This is the substance of all the experiences of this Lady. Such has been the character of her devotion. Such are the Truths, which fill her writings. Eternal truths founded on sovereign reason. Truths that supreme Wisdom would teach Truths equally to all upright spirits and all humble hearts, (supposing that there has been no Revelation), these truths known to the holy Patriarchs since the beginning of the world. Truths, which made them continually, walk before God without being known by men, like Enoch and Job. Truths drawn from the Gospel and that are uncovered there if one knows the gift of God, and if one resembles these small and simple creatures to whom he reveals his mysteries. Truths found more or less unrolled in the Writings of the most holy Fathers of Antiquity: St. Ignace, St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Basil, St. Ambroise, St. John Chrysostome, St. Augustine, etc... truths from which the great Recluses nourished themselves in the most dreadful deserts. Truths through which the great Founders of the Orders such as St. Francis of Assissi, St. Bernard, St. Teresa, The Blessed John of the Cross and St. Francis of Sales have renewed in different Centuries the face of the Church. Truths which have invited an infinite number of Virgins and Monks to bury themselves alive in solitude, in order to be delivered to these purifying operations of the Divinity, that the noise of the world and the care for earthly things, troubles only too often. Truths taught by the most enlightened Doctors of the Church, such as Albert the Great, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Grenade, Rodriquez, Silvius, Cardinal Bona-Gerson and many others. Truths finally whose tradition is universal and immutable for all time and in all places. This is what will be seen in the following Writings.

#### ADDITION OF THE PUBLISHER OF 1720 (A.D.)

**11. Excerpt from the life of the Author.** Madame Guyon having while alive pointed out to us a few particularities concerning the composition of this Work, The Reader will without doubt be very glad to see what she says,

*"I undertook, under the orders of these Gentlemen [My Examiners] a work to make the examination that they undertook easier, and to relieve them of a work which is arduous enough, or which would have taken them much less time: which has been to gather together a certain quantity of passages from mystical authorized Authors, which would show the conformity of my writings and the expressions of which I had made use with that of these holy Authors. It was an immense work. I had the pages transcribed as soon as I had written them in order to send them to these Gentlemen: and when the occasion presented itself, I explained the dubious or obscure spots, or the ones which had not been sufficiently explained in my Commentaries; because I had composed them during a time when the affairs of Molinos, {A Jesuit whose main theme for his followers was that Divine Grace was achieved by Man's work to obtain it. And not just given freely by God. Also that prayer was not necessary; Quietism (silence before God) both in a way of life and in prayer.}, had not yet broken out, I had written my thoughts without precaution and without imagining that one could ever turn their sense so as to be condemned. This work has a title THE JUSTIFICATIONS. It was composed in fifty (50) days time, and appears extremely able to enlighten the matter. But Monsieur de Meaux did not want to ever, either read or let others see these THE JUSTIFICATIONS." (In Chapter 16, Number 7 of the Volume 3.)*

**12. Warnings about this Edition.** This work is given here such as the Author left it to us, after having carefully compared the passage with the originals from which they were pulled; without changing almost anything of the language which is somewhat dated: which however especially in matters however little sublime and delicate, one could almost not touch without weakening the sense and the energy of it. Thus it is only very rarely and when the former versions appear hardly intelligible, that we have substituted in the citations of some Authors, a more modern but most exact translation.

Moreover we have tried to arrange the Authors according to the time in which they lived, and their Authorities according to the order that they hold in their Works: But as several of these Authors having been given by the RR.PP. Nicholas of Jesus-Maria and James of Jesus, in the writings that they published in order to enlighten those of the Blessed John of the Cross, we believed it necessary to leave these ones under the name of these Fathers, as we found them marked in the copy from which this printing was made.

And because in a work of this nature, where the subjects have so much relation to each other, it was almost inevitable that sometimes under different Articles the same passages, either wholly, or in part we repeated; we deemed it fitting to simply indicate these repeated Authorities by referring back to the Articles where they are found in their entirety, in order to not make this Writing too large, which as it is, will appear large enough to some.

#### **PREFACE FROM THE ENGLISH TRANSLATER/EDITOR 1992 (A.D.)**

*“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.” [Philippians 4:11-14]*

This passage and the translation work here presented were both direct commandments from God to myself via our conversations. There has never been anything that has driven me to work so hard and affected my spiritual growth as Madame Guyon’s writings. The Father has taken me through many of the writings of Madame Guyon to his great pleasure and glory.

**THE JUSTIFICATIONS**  
**OF MADAME J.M.B. de la MOTHE GUION (GUYON)**  
**Writes for herself,**  
**Following the order of the Bishops**  
**Her Examiners.**  
**Where several difficulties are clarified with regard to THE**  
**LIFE INTERIOR**

**Contained in Three Volumes**

**VOLUME ONE**

**With an Examination**  
**Of the IX and X Conferences of Cassien, concerning**

**The State of the Fixed Continual Prayer,**  
**By late Monsieur de Fenelon**  
**Archbishop of Cambria**

**VINCENTI**

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**Christopher P. Coty**

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**JUSTIFICATION  
OF THE SHORT AND EASY METHOD  
AND OF THE EXPLANATION OF THE  
SONG OF SONGS**

Addressed by the Author to the Archbishops, her Examiners.

I have submitted my writings purely and simply in all which concerns me; although I may be indifferent to the use made of them. I believe I must in truth make known the conformity they have with approved Doctors. The work that I am doing in this is only to give more light to the truth and to make it better known, without claiming to be bothered about the destiny of my writings, protesting that I take no interest in it, and that I will never even make inquiries about what is made of them. This being the case, I will take up the propositions, which are in printed Books, and those of the serious Authors who support them, with the dates, so that one can compare them. God, who sees the bottom of the hearts, knows that this has come into my spirit only since I learned that they have the charity to examine my writings, and that I am by no means doing it to support my opinion, but to clarify the truth. I ask with earnest that all my writings may be examined. As the Canticum was a continuation (of the Explanations) of all the Writings up to there, it is not at all explained, and one assumes that which precedes it was read. It is in all the writings (where the feelings are explained more fully, either in one place, or in another) that one may judge my thoughts and my faith as just. This charity is worthy of you, Gentlemen.

**PROPOSALS FOR THE SHORT AND EASY METHOD, AND OF THE SONG OF SONGS**

**SECTION 1  
ABANDON. RESIGNATION**

**SHORT METHOD**

They will give to God their heart and their liberty so that he may dispose of it at his pleasure. (Chapter 3, Number 2 of the Edition of the years 1704 and 1720.)

Be patient in prayer; when you do not perform any other in your life than waiting in patience with a spirit of humility, abandoned, resigned and content spirit for the return of the Beloved, oh excellent prayer! (Chapter 5, Number 1)

It is here that the abandon and the giving of all oneself to God must begin. – I beseech you, whoever you maybe, who wants to give yourself to God, to never take yourself back once you give yourself to him. (Chapter 6, Number 1)

Abandon (surrender) is what there is of consequence in the whole path, and it is the key to the whole interior. Whoever knows how to surrender himself; will soon be perfect.

One must therefore hold firmly to the abandonment without listening to reason or reflection, for great faith knows great abandon: one must trust in God. (Number 2)

Abandon is a stripping of all care of ourselves in order to leave ourselves entirely to the conduct of God.

All Christians are exhorted to surrender themselves.

Abandon must be, as much on the exterior as in the interior, a total relinquishment to the hands of God, neglecting very much oneself, and thinking only of God. [*Notice that it is not said that one abandons (surrenders) and neglects oneself, so as to unsettle oneself; but to be occupied by and to think only of God.*] The heart through this method remains always free, content and unentangled. (Number 3)

For practice, the soul must be able to continually lose all personal will in the will of God; to renounce all personal inclinations [*This is the method for not being deceived by the desires.*], however good they appear, as soon as one feels them being born, in order to put oneself in indifference and to want only what God has wanted for all his eternity: to be indifferent to all things, either for the body, or for the soul, for temporal and eternal goods; to leave the past in forgetting, the future of Providence, and to give the present to God; [*He who continually gives the present to God, gives him all, because he is contented with his actual application to God. The past is not ours; and the memory that we have of it would only serve to entertain self-reflection, and disengage us from God. By occupying ourselves with God, one is occupied (without being turned away from him) with all the necessary dispositions, like sorrow for one's sins, love, conformity, and the rest; for all that comes about, while occupying oneself with, in a certainly more perfect manner. In God, sins appear even more horrible in contrast with divine purity than to look at them, themselves. To be occupied with the future which does not concern God and his glory; is a chimera; for I think of the future only when I think of my God.*] to content ourselves with the actual moment which brings to us with self the eternal order of God upon us, and which is for us declaration of the will of God as infallible as it is common and inevitable for all; to attribute nothing of

what happens to us to the creature; but to look at all things in God and to regard them as if infallibly coming from his hand, except for our own sin.

Let yourself therefore be led to God as it pleases him, either in the interior, or on the exterior. (Chapter 6, Number 4)

Do not do like these people who give themselves for a time, and later withdraw themselves. (Chapter 7, Number 1)

No, you will find no consolation, but in the love of the cross and whole abandon.

Abandon and the cross go hand in hand. (Number 2)

As soon as you feel something, which revolts you, abandon yourself to God first for this same thing: it will no longer be heavy, because you will have wanted it. (Number 3)

It is necessary to receive equally all the disposition in which it pleases God to place us, choosing none of them by ourselves but to remain nearby him, to gain his affection, to annihilate (destroy) ourselves before him; but receiving equally all that he gives us, light or darkness etc. (Chapter 8, Number 2)

What do you fear? That you may not fling yourself promptly into the arms of Love, who extended them on the cross only to receive you? What risk can there be in trusting God, and abandoning oneself to him? Ah, he will not deceive you. (Chapter 12, Number 6)

God in order to oblige us to abandon ourselves to him without reserve assures us in Isaiah that we must fear nothing in surrendering ourselves, because he takes very particular care of us. [*Isaiah 49:15 – “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” (KJV)* or *Isaiah 49:15 – “Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? and if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee.” (DRV)*] (Chapter 21, Number 11)

One must surrender oneself to the Spirit of God, and let oneself be guided by his movements. (Chapter 22, Number 9)

### CANTICLE

The forts and the ramparts, which surround it, are the total abandon that this soul made of itself to its God. The Confidence, faith, hope fortified it in its abandon. [*Abandon is accompanied by distinct virtues.*] (Chapter 4, Verse 4)

The Husband only wanted to test your fidelity, and to see if you were surrendered to all his wishes. (Chapter 5, Verse 3)

*[Passive consent: It is necessary in order to explain this to pay attention to what I said, that God does not ordinarily ask for active consent. I said it in the Short Method, Chapter 27, Number 7 and it will be necessary to prove that elsewhere. But when he requests it from some souls, they feel amazing resistance and an entire revolt of feelings, although the depths of the soul may be resigned. If God proposed to the soul dishonor (ignominy) and being delivered to the rage of the Demons for a time where one is in the loving force, consent would count for almost nothing: but God requests it after having stripped the soul of its own force, from his natural courage and after having withdrawn from it a certain perceived cooperation which made up its force and its courage outside of itself in God; so that it sees only the dreadful proposition which is made to it from pain. It is then that these souls imitate the agony of the Garden: there nature shivers; but the will submits itself.*

*This hand of God is his divine omnipotence which moves the soul; but as it does no violence to our liberty, if the resistance is entire and absolute, these souls do not pass this degree and often fall: but when God still finds a remnant of abandon, or rather when the revolt is only in the senses, and the abandon and the resignation subsist in the center of the soul, God arouses this will with force although freely, and makes it do what it did not have the courage to do itself. It then says; if it is possible, that this chalice passes beyond: still may your will be done. All this is explained elsewhere. I do not know if there is anything in the agony of the Garden in St. Matthew: (See the Explanations of Matthew 26:42 – “He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.” – that is what I wanted to say.))* The Beloved despite the resistance of his Wife, holds her hand through a small passage which is still open to him, which is a remainder of abandon, despite the repugnance that the soul feels in surrendering itself with so much excess. A soul of this degree carries an estate of submission to all the wishes of God, in such a way that it would not want to refuse him anything: but when God explains his particular plans, and when using the rights that he has acquired over it, he asks from it the last renouncement and the most extreme sacrifices; ah, it is then that all bowels are moved, and that it certainly finds pain where it believed that it had no more. [*The Sacrifice that God asks from this soul is the whole misappropriation of a thousand hidden things: but it is necessary to explain it by speaking of the Sacrifice in order to follow the order that I proposed, and in the article about the Purification.*] (Chapter 5, Verse 4)

I raised the barrier, which was preventing my total loss and the consummation of my marriage; for divine marriage can be consummated, only when total loss has arrived. I therefore removed this barrier by the most courageous abandon, and the most pure sacrifice. [*Consent to damnation and not to sin. This sacrifice is that of eternity. The soul seems to be abandoned by God, and delivered to the rage of Satan; believing itself lost it abandons its eternity. It believes after this sacrifice (because it feels some moments of rest) that it is going to enjoy God; and it is the contrary: he casts it into spiritual hell. It will be necessary to explain this hell, and prove that through holy Authors. (See Purification, Numbers 40 and 70)*] This sacrifice is pure because it is made through an excess of love and the loss of all

personal interest. It is pure as I will explain in speaking of the Purification: for the soul would prefer hell to sin; therefore it does not sin, although all its feelings may be pained to believe it; the extreme sorrow (pain) that it has, certainly shows that it is not offending its God. How many times does it cry out in rapture; Damn-me, do I not sin: this soul asks for hell in order to prevent sin: it believes it has consented to all the blasphemies which its head is full of; its efforts increase its evil and double it; it is only relieved by resignation and patience. I hope to prove that in the article on the Purification or Trials. I had no planned to write so much; but I see that I am carried to it: I ask your pardon.

This is very different from certain creatures who never had any interior and in whom, if one interrogated them, one would find no belongings, which have either light or heat: and how could they have any, my God, since they are removed from you who are the source of love and light? They are the tools of Satan, and have been for a long time, in order to confuse the truth and lies. These are people who far from going outside of themselves to be lost in God, go outside of God through sin, and forget him by thinking only of themselves and delivering themselves to iniquity. It should be noticed, that in the whole Canticle the necessity of renouncing oneself is repeated, that the soul finds no pleasure either in heaven or on earth, and that it is infinitely removed from going to seek after illicit pleasures, because it flees even the most innocent. Our Wife seeks God constantly, hates itself and flees all creatures. These people on the contrary flee God never occupying themselves with him, and thinking only of satisfying their sensuality. We show that one can reach the divine marriage only through a whole and not half death, an extinction of all appetite: and these people go on, by following an unrestrained appetite, without God, without love, without truth. One may see if there is found in them the least bit of mortification. People who suffocate the senses of the conscience, and who devour, like the Behemoth (Great Beast), the rivers of iniquity; also the further they advance, the meaner they are: whereas my Wife could not endure the slightest imperfection without being burned by it; and after these trials it becomes wholly divine. These trails are passive sorrows in which it has no part: and the others deliver themselves to iniquity. My Wife can taste nothing outside of God; God alone makes it fully content: the others do not taste God, and seek all things outside of him. Therefore they have neither truth, nor love, nor peace in God; they have a giddiness of conscience which however does not prevent a thousand pains and worries: my Wife is in peace because of her perfect submission to the will of God, which unites her to her God, and her God changes her in self in an ineffable way: they are fed on sin, as she is with innocence.

I protest that when I wrote all my writings, I had never heard that there were such creatures in the world, that I had never even imagined: because I would have explained the things so well that they would have not created any difficulty. I began to hear about Molinos the first time while writing the Epistles (Letters) of St. Paul toward the middle; which obliged me to explain myself better, as you will see; if for the love and for the glory of God one wants to read them. I have always been horrified of these people, like the Devil; since without comparison he moves them like my God moves our Wife; he moves her to be inclined toward him and to be lost in him; and the Devil leads the others into hell, not into a spiritual hell, but an eternal one. I beg God to whom nothing is hidden, to make this difference known; and if something is found in my writings which speaks other than about the renouncement, about the death of oneself and of ones satisfactions, and which says something which is not in the tried (tested) Authors, as recognized as Catholic, and which may favor this miserable Sect, I detest and recant it with all my heart, as if it had never been either in my spirit or in my will: and it is so as to not be deceived myself that I ask that they be read. I believe that a work will come about which glorifies God; at least all the world will know that I am not of their feelings, that I hold them in horror and in detest. (The original is signed by her.) Which ever was. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

God keeps his residence nearby these abandoned souls, nearby these swift and rapid waters, which stop for nothing on earth; and which, when the slightest obstacle is created for them, swell with more force and flow with more impetuosity. (Chapter 5, Verse 12)

Oh poor souls, which fight all your life, and which bring back only very small victories although they cost you many injuries. If you gave yourself to God wholly good, and relinquished yourself to him, you would be more formidable than an infinite number of men armed for combat. (Chapter 6, Verse 3)

This heavenly prudence never watches only from the side: it sees only the divine moment of providence; and all that comes to it from moment to moment makes up all its foresight. (Chapter 7, Verse 4)

I have nothing that I haven't given to you: my soul, with all its powers and its operations; my body with its senses and all it can do. (Chapter 7, Verse 13)

If the greatest waters of afflictions, contradictions, miseries, poverties and crossings could not extinguish the charity in such a love: one should not believe that rivers of abandon to providence can do it: since they are those who preserve it. If man had enough courage to abandon all he owned, and all his self, to have this pure love (charity), which is acquired only by the loss of all the rest; one must not believe that after such a generous effort to acquire a good that he values more than all things, he may then come to scorn it. (Chapter 8, Verse 7)

## AUTHORITIES

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. It is I who probes (examines) the hearts, say Jesus Christ, I know what each one thinks and what it desires; and what is the object of all its intentions. Place all things therefore into my care and my guardianship, and rest in peace and in repose. (Book 3, Chapter 24, Section 1)
2. My son, if you want to possess me wholly and completely, you must give yourself to me wholly and completely reserving nothing for yourself. (Book 3, Chapter 27, Section 1)
3. It is certainly strange that you do not surrender yourself entirely to me and from the bottom of your heart, with all you can or desire or possess in this life. (Book 3, Chapter 27, Section 1)
4. St. Paul surrendered his reputation to God who penetrates the bottom of hearts; he has employed against the people who slander him only humility and patience. (Chapter 35, Section 2)
5. My son, leave yourself, and you will find me. Have no will or choice, strip yourself of property, and you will always grow in virtue; because as soon as you have entirely surrendered yourself to me, without taking up concern for yourself again, I will spread my grace in you with more abundance. (Book 2, Chapter 37, Section 1)
6. Lord, how many times must I abandon myself to you, or in what case must I leave myself?  
My son, abandon yourself to me always, at all hours, in the smallest things as in the greatest. I exclude nothing; but I want to find you in everything bare of everything. (Chapter 37, Section 1)
7. There are some who surrender themselves to me; but it is always with some reserve: and as they do not have full confidence in me, they still intervene in the care of themselves. There are some who at first offer themselves in order to be entirely mine; but finding themselves attacked by temptation, they once again make themselves the masters of themselves; and so they do not advance in virtue.  
These [Sacrifice Number 1] people never taste the true freedom of a pure heart, or this gentleness and this grace that I give to the soul in having it enter my wholly divine familiarity, if beforehand they do not surrender themselves to me without reserve, by a sacrifice and a continual immolation of all that they are; since without that no one can ever be perfectly united to me or enjoy the possession of me. (Book 3, Chapter 37, Section 4)
8. My son, place in my hands always everything, which concerns you, I will take care of all, and I will make all succeed in its time. Await my orders and my will; and you will draw a great advantage from this submission.  
Lord, it is with great joy that I surrender to you the care of all which concerns me, because when I want to take it up myself, I feel how much I torment myself needlessly. (Chapter 39, Section 1)
9. Henry Suso: The third degree is an abandon without limits through which one leaves oneself to God, everywhere one finds oneself, as if no longer taking any interest in self; and God exercises there a full domination. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 15)

### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

10. O blessed soul, which in all things dies to its will, because it lives in all with its God, and God even lives in it. This soul was through its will so dead to itself, that after some time, it was said to it: What would you like in heaven or on Earth? Never would it have said anything else, except: I want what I find in myself at this very hour and at this moment. And it said: We must never want any thing other than what happens to us from moment to moment, nevertheless always training ourselves for the good. (*Life*, Chapter 31)
11. This Love operated through all the powers of the soul as it wished: they were wholly obedient to it, and could not want anything else, except what they had of it from moment to moment and nothing more; and to seek something else would have been a hell for them. – If I had been asked, “What do you want? What do you understand? And of what thing do you remember?” I would have responded; “I want nothing, I understand nothing and I remember nothing except what Love wants, understands and remembers: for it keeps me so occupied in him and so filled that I do not need to go beg in order to feed my powers, and it seems to me that if it were not for love they would die of hunger.” [*Satiation; which shows what is said in the Short Method (Chapter 12, Number 3) that the cessation of operations and non desire come only in abundance.*] (Chapter 40)

12. Since Love has taken over the care and the government of all things in me, never did it let go; so that since this time I have taken no care of it and could perform no operation of understanding, of memory and of will, no more that if I had ever had any of these faculties. (Chapter 41)

#### ST. TERESA

13. It seems to me that here, as it has been said to you, it is appropriate that the soul deliver and abandon itself from everything into the arms of God: if he wants to ravish it in heaven, that it may go there; if he wants to lead it into hell, that it may follow, and that it may not be pained to do so, since it is walking with its God. That if he wants to take away its life, that it may consent to it; if he wants it to live a thousand more years; that it may acquiesce to his divine will: finally that his Majesty disposes of it as if his own: for the soul is no longer of itself or mistress of self; but it is entirely delivered to God: consequently that it no longer has care of anything. (*Life*, Chapter 17)

14. I miss everything, my Lord; but if you do not abandon me I will not leave you. All the Scholars may band up against me, all created things may persecute me, the devils may torment me; but you alone will not leave me: for I know by experience what benefit and advantage those who confide in you alone draw from all these assaults. (*Life*, Chapter 25)

15. I think that this happens like this, because the soul strongly in love with the love of Jesus Christ its Husband, has all these caresses, all these lapses, these deaths, these afflictions, these delights and these joys with him, after it has left all the comforts of the world for his love, and it has entirely delivered and surrendered itself into his hands; and this not from words like it happens to some, but with a very genuine love consumed by works. – I beseech you to not be amazed by caressing and loving words between God and the soul that you notice in Holy Scripture. The love that he brought to us, and that he brings to us, being such as we are, amazes me more. (*Concept of the Love of God*, Chapter 1)

16. Consider, my daughters, that in order to reach what we are talking about, God wants you to save nothing, neither a little nor a lot: he wants all without exception or reserve; and he will do great or small favors for you in conformity with what you will know yourself to have given him. There is no better proof then to know if our prayer arrives at the union or not. (*Chastisement of the Soul V Dem.*, Chapter 1)

17. God admitted it into the wine cellar and ordered love (charity) into it. Now it is love (charity) itself, because this soul already delivered into the hands of God; the great love has subdued and captivated it so much that it knows nor wants anything else, except that God disposes of it whatever good seems to him, -- Because truly the soul does not do any more than wax here, when the stamp is impressed there, which is not impressed; but it is only laid out, that is to say that it is soft: and even concerning this disposition it is not it which softens itself; but it only remains in repose and endures it. (*Chastisement of the Soul Dem. V*, Chapter 2)

18. It had proposed to abandon itself entirely into the hands of he who is so powerful; for it sees that this is the best way to necessarily perform virtue. (Dem. VI, Chapter 5)

19. Ah, that you may desire nothing else, from a soul which is indeed resolved to love you, and which surrendered itself to your hands, except that it obeys. – It does not need to look for the ways or think of the choices it must make; its will already being yours. (*Foundation of Medine du Champ*, Chapter 5)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

20. Certainly our will can never die, no more than our own spirit; but it sometimes passes beyond the limits of its ordinary life, in order to live [Desire inevitably follows will. If our will passes into God, as St. Francis of Sales says, our desire also passes into him; for desire is inseparable from it. The will is like fire, and desire is its flame. Non-will and non-desire come from the same cause, which is death for us and life in God, which comes about through love and transformation of our will into God's.] wholly in divine will: it is then that it no longer knows how or wants to want anything, but it surrenders itself totally and without reserve to the good pleasure of divine providence, being mixed and soaked with this good pleasure so much that it no longer appears, but is totally hidden with Jesus Christ in God, where it lives, no longer itself, but the will of God lives in it.

What becomes of the clarity of the stars when the Sun appears on our horizon? It certainly does not perish; but it is ravished and engulfed in the sovereign light of the Sun, with which it is happily mixed and conjoined. And what becomes of human will when it is totally abandoned to divine good pleasure? It does not completely perish; but it is overwhelmed by and mixed with the will of God so much that it no longer appears, and has no more will separate from the will of God.

St. Francis continues with an admirable comparison of the voyage of St. Louis and the Queen: he concludes do you not intend to go also Madame? Not really I have no intention, except to be near the King, and the places where he goes

are of no consideration to me and I am indifferent to them, except as far as he will be there; I go without any desire to go. – It is therefore the King who goes and who wants the voyage; and as for me, I do not go: if I follow, I do not want the trip, but only the presence of the King. (*On Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 13)

21. We can, as little children of the heavenly Father, go with him in two ways; [*Fine difference between the conformity of our will and the loss of this same will in the divine will.*] for we can go first of all, walking steps on our own will which we conform to his, always holding in the hand of our obedience that of his divine intention, and following it everywhere it leads us. – God indicated to me that he wanted me to imagine the day of repose; it is necessary therefore for me to want it, and for that I must have my own will, through which I may follow his, conforming and corresponding myself to that one.

But we can also go with Our Lord without any personal will, letting ourselves simply be carried [*Wholly divine expression from profound experience.*] to his divine pleasure, like a small child in the arms of his mother, by a certain sort of admirable consent, which can be called union, or rather unity of our will with that of God: and that is the way in which we must endeavor to conduct ourselves in the will of the divine good pleasure; in so far as the effects of this will of this good pleasure proceed purely from his providence, without us making them happen to us. It is true that we can certainly want [*First will from conformity.*] them to happen in accordance with the will of God, and this wish is very good; but we can certainly also receive the outcomes from the heavenly divine pleasure through [*The second will which is from unity.*] a most simple tranquility or our will, which not wanting anything, simply acquiesces to what God wants to in us, upon us, and of us.

[*Admirable representations of the annihilation of the will in that of God through total abandon.*] If the Holy Child – Jesus had been asked while being carried in the arms of his Mother, where he was going; would he not have been right in responding: I am not going, it is my Mother who is going for me? And whoever would have asked him? But are you not at least going with your Mother? Would he not have been right in saying: No, I am not at all going, or if I am going there by where my Mother carries me, I am not going there with her, nor by my own steps, but I am going there by the steps of my Mother. And whoever would have replied to him: But at least, O most dear divine child, you certainly want to let yourself be carried by your sweet Mother? Indeed, could not he have said, I want nothing of all that, but as my wholly good Mother walks for me, also does she want for me; I leave her equally the care to go and want to go for me or for whatever seems good to her, and as I walk only by her steps so do I want only by her wishes. And as her walk suffices for her and for me, so does her will suffice for her and for me without me making any wish [*The non-desire must be measured by the non-wanting: for one desire only by the will.*]; I do not take care if she goes fast or gently from one side or from another, nor do I inquire in the least where she wants to go. –

We must be like that, making ourselves flexible and manageable to the divine good pleasure, as if we were made of wax, without amusing ourselves by wishing for and wanting things; but letting them be wanted and made by God for us, such as it pleases him; casting all our solicitude into him, all the more because he has care of us in the way that the Holy Apostle states, “**Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**” (I Peter 5:7) and note that he says: All our solicitude, that is to say, as much the one that we have from receiving the outcomes as the one of wanting or not wanting; for he will take care for the success of our affairs, and for wanting for us what will be the best. O this occupation of our will is excellent, when it leaves the care of wanting and choosing the results of the divine good pleasure, in order to praise and thank him in his results. (*On the Love of God*, Book 9, Chapter 14)

22. To glorify God and thank him for all the events that his Providence commands, is in truth a most holy occupation: but if while we leave to God the care of wanting and doing that which will please him in us, upon us and of us, without being attentive to what happens, although we certainly feel it, we could divert our heart, and apply our attention to goodness and divine sweetness, glorifying it not for its effects or outcomes that it orders, but for itself, and for its own excellence we would without doubt be performing a much more distinguished exercise. – [*St. Francis of Sales after having made the evil of reflection known, proposes the example of a person who does not reflect, in comparison with the daughter of a Doctor.*] The daughters of an excellent Doctor having a continuous fever and knowing that her father loved her alone, said to one of her friends, “I feel much pain, but nevertheless” [*One must surrender oneself into pain and sorrow, and forget oneself; not even desiring.*] “I do not think of cures; for I do not know what could cure me. I could desire one thing, and one more thing would be necessary. Do I not then deserve better than to leave all this care to my father who knows, who can do and who wants for me all which is necessary for my health?” [*Note that this neglect of self does not come from stupidity; but one neglects oneself in order to think only of God; one ceases to love oneself by the excess of his love.*] “I would be wrong to think of it; for he will think enough about it for me: I would be wrong to want something; for he will want enough, all which will be beneficial for me. I will want for him to want what he will judge to be expedient, I will amuse myself only by looking at him by swearing to him my filial love and making known to him my perfect confidence.” – Then her father asked her if she did not want to be bled to be cured. “I am yours, my father, she responded, I do not know what I must want in order to be cured; it is for you to want and to do for me all that seems good to you: as for me it is sufficient to love and honor you with all my heart, as I do.” Then her arm was bandaged, and the father himself brought the lance to the vein: but while he made the cut and the blood flowed out, never did this loving daughter look at her arm bleed, nor see her blood flow from the vein; but keep her eyes

fixed, on the face of her father, she said nothing except sometimes very gently, "My father loves me, and I am all his." And when all was done, she did not thank him. [*Can there be a more accomplished abandon? It does not allow thanks, because there is a personal interest, and because pure love has not return or relation to itself. It is not for a lack of recognition that one does not thank, but for excess of love.*] but only repeated the same words of her affection and filial confidence. (Chapter 15)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

23. Man has nothing better to do than leave and surrender himself to God in each moment, with order and reason, and above all order and reason, giving himself being eternally prey to God, by the entire loss of his will. Happy is the loss which makes the man very rich, to give himself and all his riches to God; either in the fire of profound tribulation accompanied by supreme poverty in all senses and manners possible; or yet in the double fire of loving resignation, which suppresses all feeling as much on the inside as on the outside, and even down to the marrow of the soul and the most intimate place of its depths! (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9)

24. Finally our exertions and our paths do not plan only abandon, loss, resignation, but eternal resignation of the spirit and of the senses, death without consolation or refreshment, neither in accordance with the spirit, nor with the senses, nor with the body. So that we believe and feel ourselves to be almost outcast and unknown by God neither more nor less than what he has never known, without nevertheless either forbearing or from his slacking off from a single point of spirit and heart for his eternal pursuit. Jesus Christ our dear Husband lived in this way for us. (Chapter 12)

25. Here then one must be armed with strength, with patience and with consistency in order to never sway either to the right or to the left, without doing anything but suffering as if one can other wise, and awaiting in full and loving confidence the blessed and pleasant return of the Husband. It is necessary, I say, that the Wife wholly stripped of herself, and of all satisfaction, be totally resigned and renounced, conforming herself wholly to the divine will, to endure for a time and for eternity the rigors of such a winter, I mean, of the absence of her Husband. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 16)

26. While there remains [*To be perfectly abandoned, one must be dead to personal operations.*] for the soul one point of life possible for loving aspiration, (there is a loving thrust) the soul does not have the disposition required to give and deliver itself purely and fully in as prey to God, to make the first approaches to the mystic and sur-eminent path, through the entire loss and abandon of all oneself: - losing and surrendering oneself into the arms of infinite God to be moved from there into him alone. (Chapter 22)

27. Our resignation is infinite and without end, and does not even have the present or eternity; although it may be true that it must come to an end with us. As for the rest we do not think of all these distinctions and reflections, all the more because we do not exist, being perfectly annihilated. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 10)

28. When someone who inclines toward perfection, has come to the last point of death, his spiritual Father must certainly take care to exhort him to confess immediately before dying, provided that he had beforehand confessed all he was thinking which bothered his conscience. The reason is, that the perfect must, most nobly and perfectly resign themselves at this time to the justice of God in time and in eternity, and must be as desirous of being submitted by whole resignation and renunciation of themselves to the good pleasure of God and his divine justice, as to receive mercy. But this most high secret requires a most true perfection acquired by the practice of all the virtues and by fervent and continual love. (Part 2, Chapter 4)

29. These souls are always satisfied and content, abandoning themselves purely, fully and with an ardent love into the hand of their infinite Majesty, so that he may work through them and in them according to his good pleasure. And though it may be true the time and the successes may be much varied in them because of your different operations, it does not matter: it is always this side of the Wives, all the more because it is neither your flow nor all which is yours that they desire, but you alone in your flow, and without your flow. You are then their Everything, O my dear wife, and their paradise, because truly are they yours. (Contemplation, Number 3)

30. There is a much more subtle trap that I have not yet touched on, which is the loss of the sentient repose into which nobody wishes to pass; this is your barrier, which you do not want to cross, by surrendering yourself purely and fully to lose your sentient repose, although this would be losing it, without losing it. For by surrendering yourself to that always and everywhere, you would make your repose simple and within the spirit, and you would enjoy simply and tranquilly, God, who is himself your repose, not with standing the efforts of the sentient species. [*Peace which surpasses all feeling; it is this peace that St. Paul speaks about ("And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep*

your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7) and that John of the Cross calls thrice fold peace: See Dark Night, Book 11, Chapter 9] (Letter 6)

31. My goal is to present to you concisely the essential holiness of this great man in his most last and most sur-eminent path; from where one can judge piously what is his immense glory (essential in the homeland), his accidental glory which indivisibly follows all his virtues which have been most exemplary and most eminent up to death. He commended himself to the prayers of no one [*Through excess of disappropriation which makes one no longer take interest in self.*] by dying; he knew the infinite reason for it. As for me, this view and this presentation are so delectable, that I would like to be forever occupied by it. (Letter 35 on the death of Father Dominique of St. Albert)

32. Remember that the holiness of God within men is lodged in and consists of the entire loss, abandon and renouncement of themselves; so that being lost to self and to men into God, through good and licit means, is all the holiness here below of which I could not imagine the excellence. (Letter 30)

33. Gain and abundance must yield to loss and abandon. (Letter 63)

FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL  
gives an account of

34. St. Augustine: That all imaginations may cease, that the heavens may be silent, and the soul itself may keep in self a profound silence, and that it may surrender itself wholly in God, as if it were no longer thinking of self. (Confessions, LIX, Chapter 10) (Mystic Conser. 5)

35. My attraction and my instinct, if I have any or can know them, brings me sooner to see nothing, to do nothing, even to not watch if I can or if I must do something, but to walk like a blind man and lose myself in God so much, that I do not even amuse myself in seeing that I am getting lost, and how I do, or even how God is losing me: Therefore I have my powers so bound that I cannot make use of them at any time to perform interior acts; and I am never in greater peace in my superior portion, and I am never better in my center than when I leave myself at the mercy of this attraction to do nothing and to try to do nothing for myself.

[Loss Number 57] I have been told that when a thing is lost, whoever lost it no longer sees it and no longer makes use of it: in the same way when the soul has absolutely surrendered and given itself to God, being engulfed in him without reserve, it is lost in God with all its powers; and it would not know how to make use of them unless it went forth from God to go back into itself. The soul is lost in God, so as to no longer be in itself and to no longer live in itself; but so as to be wholly in God, so that it is he who lives in it. It is therefore for God to live in the soul, to perform and to operate in it all that will please him.

My powers served for me as instruments to reach the union with my God; I then have no more need to use these powers to arrive at this union, since it is done, and my soul has been united with God for several years: [Not never: stability] Never do I feel myself drawn to say to him any words either about love or confidence, or abandon; or to desire the feelings to do so, or to desire to have them; if God gives them to me, I receive them, if not, I do not seek them, or think of asking him for anything either for me or for the others.

And when I am in drought I do not force myself to perform acts of submission in order to put myself in the disposition to suffer, or to do whatever. Finally it seems to me impossible to do anything, or desire anything, except that the good pleasure of God is eternally achieved in me and in all the creatures: I do not however think about desiring it; but that is my interior disposition. [Abandon Number 35] It has been advised for me that I feel no resistance or difficulty, at least in my will, in accepting and enduring all that God could want, even when it is the punishment of Hell for eternity; because when it is his good pleasure, I will commit no sin, and would not commit any, since his good pleasure cannot want sin, and is never the author of it.

Here then is all my achievement, to do nothing, and to not even desire to do anything: in such a way that not only is my desire to desire nothing, my will to want nothing, my inclination to not be inclined, my choice to not make any choice; but I do not even want to desire to desire nothing, because I am told that this would be a desire. I would like to not even think or look if I have the desire to have no desire, in order to be lost all the better, and to walk without these supports which are not God, removing all the obstacles which are between him and my soul, so that he can operate and communicate himself to it when he wants. (Circular Letter on her death) (Conference 19)



## SECTION 2 ACTS (DEEDS)

### SHORT METHOD

The souls which walk in this path will often be amazed that when they approach the Confessional [*Confession will be explained in its place*], and they begin to tell their sins, instead of regret and an act of contrition that they are accustomed to doing, a gentle and tranquil love seizes their heart. Those who are not instructed want to draw themselves away from it to perform an act of contrition, because they heard that this is necessary, and it is true. But they do not see that they are losing the true contrition, which is this infused love, infinitely greater than what they could do by themselves. They have an eminent act, which includes the others with more perfection; although they do not have these ones, as distinct and multiplied. That they may not be troubled to do something else when God acts excellently in them and with them. (Chapter 15, Number 3)

Some people hearing about the Prayer of Silence are falsely persuaded that the soul remains there stupid, dead and without action. But it is certain that it acts there more nobly and with more vastness than it had ever, up to this degree; since it is moved by God himself, and it acts through his Spirit. St. Paul wants us to let ourselves be moved by the Spirit of God. [*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*] Romans 8:14] It is not being said that one should not act; but that one must act with dependence on the movement of grace. (Chapter 21, Number 1)

This act of the soul is an act full of repose. When it acts by itself, it acts with effort; that is why it then distinguishes its acts better. But when it acts with dependence on the Spirit of grace, its act is so free, so comfortable, and so natural that it seems that it is not acting. –

As soon as the soul is in central yearning, that is to say, turned within itself through meditation, starting this moment it is in a very strong act, which is a course of the soul toward its center which attracts it, and which infinitely surpasses the speed of all the others. – It is therefore an act, an act so noble, so peaceable and so tranquil that it seems to the soul that it is not acting; because it is acting as if naturally.

When a wheel is only somewhat turning, one certainly distinguishes it: but when it goes with great speed, nothing is distinguished in it anymore. In the same way the soul that remains in repose nearby God, has an act infinitely noble and raised; but a most peaceable act. The more it is in peace, the more it runs with speed; because it is surrendered to the Spirit which moves it and makes it act. (Number 2)

This spirit is nothing other than God, who attracts us, and who in drawing us, makes us run to him. (Number 3)

It is not therefore a question of remaining idle, but of acting with dependence on the Spirit of God which must animate us. – So that God acting infinitely, and letting us be moved by the Spirit of God, we are acting much more than by our own action. (Number 4)

Our action must therefore be to put us in the state of enduring the action of God, and to give place to the Word to trace his image in us. An image, which is moving, would prevent the Painter from drawing a picture on it. All the movements that we make by our own spirit prevent this admirable Painter from working, and make him create false traits. One must therefore remain in peace, and be moved only when he moves us. (Number 5)

That this action is nobler is an incontestable thing. It is certain that the thing have value only as much as the principle from which they come is noble, great and lofty.

The acts made by a divine principle are divine acts [*Note: See John of the Cross, below, Number 5, and Volume 1, SECTION 4 on Center of the Soul, Number 3*] whereas the actions of the creature, however good they appear, are human actions, or at most virtuous, when they are made with grace.

It is not being claimed that there is no acting done, but only acting with dependence of the Spirit of God, to give room to his act to take the place of that of the creature. Which is only made with the consent of the creature; and the creature gives this consent only by moderating his action, to give room little by little to the action of God to take the place. (Number 6)

Jesus Christ shows us this conduct in the Gospel. Martha did good things; but because she did them with her own spirit, Jesus Christ reproved her for it. The spirit of man is turbulent and troubled: that is why he does little although he appears to do a lot. [Luke 10:41-43] What did Mary Magdalene choose? Peace, tranquility and repose. She stopped acting on the outside, to let herself be moved by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. (Number 7)

The deeds of man are either exterior or interior. The exterior ones are those, which appear on the outside, with regard to some sensory object; and which have no other goodness, nor moral malice, than that which they received from the interior principle from which they come.

It is not those ones that I mean to speak about; but only interior acts: which are actions of the soul, through which it applies itself interiorly to some objects, or turns away from some others. (Chapter 22, Number 1)

When being applied to God, I want to perform an act of another nature, I am turned away from God; and I am turned toward created things, more or less, depending on whither my action is more or less strong. If having turned toward the creature, I want to return toward God, I must perform an action to turn me away from this creature, and turn me toward God: and thus the more the deed is perfect, the more whole is the conversion.

Until I am perfectly converted, I need several acts to turn me toward God: some do it all of a sudden, others do it little by little; but my act must bring me to be brought toward God, employing all the force of my soul to him.

But as the spirit of man is light, and the soul being accustomed to being turned to the outside, it is easily dissipated and turned away; as soon as it perceives that it has turned itself away in the things on the outside; it must through a simple act, which is a return toward God, be placed into him again: then its act subsists in so far as its conversion lasts, by dint of turning itself again toward God through a simple and sincere return. (Number 2)

And as several acts reiterated make up a habit, the soul contracts the habit of conversion, and of an act, which consequently becomes almost habitual.

The soul need not take pains to look for this act in order to perform it; because it subsists: and even the soul cannot do it without finding great difficulty in it. It even finds that it pulls itself from its state under the pretext of looking for it; which it must never do, since the act subsists in habit, and since then it is in a habitual conversion and love. An act is sought through other acts, instead of keeping oneself attached to God alone by a simple act.

One will notice that one will sometimes have the ease to distinctly perform such acts, but simply: it is a sign that one has turned away, and that one re-enters the heart after having been turned away from it. But one remains there in repose as soon as one has entered.

When one then believes, that it is not necessary to perform acts, one is mistaken; for one always performs acts; but each person must do them in conformity with his degree. (Number 3)

To clarify this point which is a difficult one for most spirituals, the failure to understand it: one must know that there are fleeting and specific acts, and continual acts; direct acts and reflected acts. Everybody cannot do the first ones, and every body is not in a state to do the others.

The first acts must be performed by people who have turned away. They must be turned by an action which is distinguishable, and which is more or less strong, according to whether the turning away was more or less removed, so that when the turning away is light, one of the simplest acts will be sufficient. (Number 4)

I call the continued act that one through which the soul is wholly turned toward its God, through a direct act that it does not renew, unless it was interrupted; but which subsists. The soul being wholly turned in this way, is then in charity, and it remains there. –

Then the soul is like in a habit of the act, resting in this same act. But its repose is not idle: for then there is an always extant which is a recess in God, where God lures it always more strongly; and it following this such strong lure, and remaining in his love and in his charity, is always trusting more into this same love, and it has an infinitely stronger act, [*This comes about by the love infused into the will, or by a real inclination toward the goal.*] more vigorous and ready, than the act which served only to perform the return. (Number 5)

Now the soul, which is in this profound and strong act, being wholly turned toward its God, does not take notice of this act, because it is direct and not reflected. Which makes this person not explaining himself well, say, that he is not performing any acts? But he should say rather, that he does not distinguish any acts. He does not perform them by himself; I agree: but he is drawn away, and he follows that which attracts him. Love is the weight which sinks him in like a person who falls in the sea, sinks and would sink indefinitely if the sea were infinite: and without noticing this sinking he would descend to the greatest depths with unbelievable speed.

It is therefore to speak improperly, to say, that one is not performing any acts. Everybody performs acts; but everybody does not do them in the same manner: and the abuse comes when all those who know that they must perform an act, would like to make them distinct and sensory. That cannot be; the sensory ones are for the beginners, and the others for advanced souls. To stop at the first acts, which are weak, and to advance little, it to deprive oneself of the last ones: in the same way that wanting to perform the last ones before having passed the first would be another abuse. (Number 6)

#### CANTICLE

The return of the Wife is as prompt and sincere, as her mistake had been light and unforeseen. (Chapter 6, Verse 12)

This beautiful soul (like the palm tree) has two qualities: one is to never bend toward itself for any kindness that it has received from God; the other is to not produce the slightest action by itself, however small it may be. (Chapter 7, Verse 7)

The Wife invites her Husband to go everywhere; for then she is wholly put in action. And as God is always acting on the outside and always resting on the inside; in the same way this soul which is confirmed on the inside in a perfect repose, is also wholly acting on the outside. (Chapter 7, Verse 12)

#### AUTHORITIES

1. Henry Suso: The soul is then like the eye which does not see its action, and which forgets itself in watching its Object. (*Dialogue on the Truth*, Chapter 9)

2. St. Catherine of Genes: Being in this way retaken by Love, I no longer performed any action either interior or exterior, which someone could take notice of. (*Life*, Chapter 41)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

3. When the two houses of the soul are appeased and fortified in one with all their domestics (servants), which are the powers and the appetites, putting them to sleep and silencing them with regard to all things on high and down low, the Son of God united himself immediately into them with a new knot of the possession of love. (*Dark Night*, Book 1, Chapter 24)

4. All this is so much employed in God, that even without the soul noticing; all the parts of this apparatus that we said, in their first movements are ordinarily inclined to operate in God and for God; because understanding, will, and memory go directly to God, and the affections, the senses, the desires and appetites, hope, joy and all its accessories at first are inclined immediately to God although, as I said, the soul does not take care that it is operating for God, so it happens that this soul works and operates for God very frequently, and watches him, and what concerns him, without thinking or remembering that it is doing this for him; because the employment and the habit that it already holds in such a manner of proceeding, makes it lack the advertence, and the care, and even the fervent acts of sensitive devotion that it has been used to having at the beginning of its works. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 20)

5. This is the operation of the Holy Spirit in the soul transformed into its love; for the interior acts that it performs, are burning and blazing, which are inflammations of love with which the united will, loves most highly; being made one same thing with this flame through love. And so the acts of love of the soul are most precious, and it earns more by one single one than with many others that it has performed with this transformation. (See Volume 1 SECTION 26 on Habit of virtues and deed, Number 3) And the difference which is found between the habit and the act, is also found between the transformation into love and the flame of love, which is that which is found between the wood on fire and its flame; for the flame is an effect of the fire which is there. From where it comes that we can say about the soul which is in a state of transformation of love, that its ordinary habit is like the wood which is always surrounded, penetrated and lit up by the fire, and its acts which are born from the fire of love are the flame, which is all the more vehement because the fire of union is more intense, and because the will is more ravished and absorbed by the flame of the Holy Spirit, like the example [Judges 13:20] of this Angel which from the sacrifice of Manoah, ascended to God in the flame. And (See Volume 2, SECTION 39 on Divine Motion, Number 8) so in this actual state the soul cannot perform these acts if the Holy Spirit does not push it to them most particularly; and that is why all its acts are divine, in so far as it is moved by God with this particularity. [*The acts of people moved by the Spirit of God are divine acts, because they draw their value from the principle from which they came.*] From where it comes that it seems to it that all the times that this flame blazes, making it love with divine taste and temperament, it is given eternal life which raises it to divine operation in God. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verse 1)

6. To better understand this, one must know that the state of beginners is to meditate and discourse: in this state is necessary to give the soul material, so that it discourses and performs its interior acts, and makes use of the fire and of the spiritual sentient favor, because it is thus convenient to accustom the senses and the appetites to good things; and so that enticing them with this favor, they are torn away from the age. But when that is not in the least done, immediately God begins to put them in this state of contemplation, which arrives in a very short time principally in Monks. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 5)

7. One must then lead the soul through a path completely opposite [*Note: One must lead the soul in a manner completely different from Meditation.*] to the first. If beforehand it was given material to meditate, and that it meditated, now it must be removed from the soul, and it does not meditate; for it could not when it wanted too, and that would distract it. If beforehand it sought taste and fervor, which it found, at present it neither seeks nor wants any: for not only will it not find any by its diligence, but on the contrary it will only draw barrenness from that; because it is being entertained by the tranquil and peaceable good that is given to it secretly in the spirit, by the action or operation that it wants to perform through senses; and thus losing the one, it does not do the other, all the more because it is no longer given the good through the senses like beforehand. That is why one must [*Note: Never.*] never in this state direct it to meditate, or to perform acts draw through discourse it must also not procure with attachment either favor or fervor; because that would be placing an obstacle to the principle agent who is God, who secretly and tranquilly puts wisdom and loving direction in the soul without much difference, expression or multiplication of acts; although sometimes he makes them be specified in the soul with a certain duration or space of time, and then the soul must attend only to the loving attention of God, without specifying any acts other than those to which it is inclined by him, carrying itself passively, without performing any diligent acts from self, with [*Simple loving regard*] simple loving and sincere regard, like which would opens the eyes with a glance of love. For since [*Conformity that there must be between the agent and the participant: between God and the soul.*] God then negotiates deals with the soul as to the manner of giving, by sincere and loving instruction; the soul must also negotiate with him, as to the way for receiving, by

knowledge and simple and loving regard, to join in this way instruction with instruction and love with love; because it is fitting that he who receives behaves in the same way as what he receives and not otherwise, so as to be able to receive and retain it like it was given to him: from where it follows that if the soul did not quit its ordinary way of discoursing it would receive only imperfectly impatient charity, and thus it would not receive it with the perfection that he gave to it. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 6)

8. So many times does God anoint the soul with some delicate unction of loving, calm, peaceable, solitary unction very removed from the senses and from what one can think, and does he keep it without being able to taste or meditate on any things, either those things on high, or those here below; because God keeps it occupied in this solitary action, inclined to leisure and solitude, someone will come along who only knows how to bang on the anvil like a blacksmith, and in so far as he knows no other skill than that, he will speak like this: Come, pull yourself away from that; it is just wasting time and remaining idle: but take up this other exercise, meditate and perform some deeds, because some industry is needed on your part; because these other things are abuse, deceit and amusements for coarse people without spirit. And (See Volume 2, SECTION 39 on Divine Motion, Number 12) so [*The little enlightened, harmful Guides*] not understanding the degrees of prayer nor the ways of the spirit, they do not see that these actions that they desire from the soul are already done, and that this way of discourse, is already achieved: since this soul has already arrived at sensory abnegation, and when one has already arrived at the end, and one has already gone through the path, it is not necessary to walk further, because this would be to distance oneself again from the goal: so not understanding that this soul is already in the path of the spirit, in which there is no more discourse and the senses cease, and where God [*Word of God in the soul. God's agent.*] is particularly the agent and he who speaks to the solitary soul, they fling into the soul other ointments of coarse instructions and delights, which they entertain it with, and remove the solitude and retreat from it, and consequently the excellent work that God had imprinted in it. And so it does not perform the one, and does not profit by the other. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 8)

9. The acts which are performed following this infused contemplation, are so much more excellent, meritorious and savory, because the motive which upsets this love is bitter, which attaches it to the soul; because the will is near God and detached from other tastes: that is why one must be careful to keep the will empty and disengaged from its affections; for if it does not turn around wanting to taste some delight or consolation, although it does not particularly feel them in God, it advances, ascending to God beyond all things, since it is not concerned about the taste of anything; and although it does not distinctly taste God and it does not love him by a specific deed, nevertheless in this general infusion it tastes him obscurely and secretly.

The will to go to God must be withdrawn from all delicious and savory things, rather than relying on them. With that one certainly satisfies the precept of love, which is to love God above all things, which to be accomplished in all perfection, requires this nakedness and special emptiness of all things. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 10)

10. The Masters who do not understand the souls who enter into this state, -- thinking that these souls are idle, because as the Apostle says, (I Corinthians 2:14 - "~~But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.~~") [*That is to say that he does not pass the animal sense of the sensory sphere.*] -- make them discourse and perform acts not without great trouble, repugnance, avidity, and distraction for these souls who would like to be in their quiet and peaceful recollection, persuading them to procure essences and fervor --: which not being able to do, -- they believe themselves lost, and even help themselves to believe it, wither their spirit, removing from them the precious unction with which God has embalmed them in solitude and tranquility; -- substituting unction of work and mind; since they lose in the one and are uselessly pained in the other. [*Understanding*] Such people ignore what the spirit is: they commit a great irreverence and do conspicuous injury to the Majesty of God, putting their coarse hand where he operates: for it has not cost him little to lead these souls up to here, and it took a lot to have guided them into this solitude and emptiness of their powers and operations, in order to be able to speak to the heart, which is what he always desires, by already taking the care, being he who reigns in the souls with an abundance of peace and repose, making the discursive acts of the powers cease, with which working all night, they did nothing. [*Note: God desires to speak to the heart of man, and one opposes him and stops the souls.*] -- Now how much does he value this tranquility? (See Volume 3, SECTION 51 on Quietude, Number 32) (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 11)

11. Father James of Jesus: The second Phrase that it is good to express here is the one which the Mystics commonly make use of at the height of Contemplation when the powers are almost ravished, suspended and unable to operate. --

In this, one only wants to say that the powers are not operating on their own, since what they receive is entirely infused: and (See Volume 1, SECTION 15 on Non-Desire, Number 31) that which then comes from understanding, is a

simple caution and suspended admiration, and letting oneself be illustrated, penetrated and consumed by the divine light; and from the will, to righteously annihilate and destroy so that the soul does not feel, love, desire or rejoice in any thing other than in God alone; and that with such a taste and serenity that he seems to not be operating, because this loving and simple affection is so intimate and almost substantiated in the soul, that it seems to touch the essence and not the powers; in part because of the greatness and internal and deep radiation of affection, and in part by the simplicity and sweetness of he, whose perfection approaches repose more than movement, [As Aristotle and St. Thomas after him said] and seems that it is rather a habit than a deed, because the soul is of a habitual disposition of love inclining toward God, because all habitual, intense, simple and gentle inclination united to God, makes that which is action appear to be not so, but instead a thing almost substantial and a transformation of being.

The reason for that is firstly that an action is a movement, and that these spiritual acts last only an instant, the soul which feels itself moved, but which feels in this divine affection a kind of immutability and consistency of duration, which does not seem to it to be an action.

Secondly because the common and ordinary part of its actions, is to discourse and draw one truth from another, or be deepened with pain and deformity in the soul, or the advance through these acts and with them acquire something else, to which intention, necessity, or desire orders it, the soul feeling itself moved and advanced to the good, or to the foreseen and premeditated end. (*Notes on John of the Cross*, Disciple 1, Phrase 2)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

12. We do not mean, by this too great boiling of desires, to find fault with the holy desires which are in God according to their essence, or as long as they are well-ordered; but when badly ordered, or accompanied by some circumstance which hinders their fullness or full accomplishment and their deification through total entry, loss and death in God. [Acts Number 12] This hindrance is a too great boiling, namely active: I say active, to exclude the passive, which is gentle, profound and deiform, without sound or action; but on the contrary this active hindrance is impetuous, restless, superficial, which feels man, nature, natural and human operation too much. And these two desires are like two bodies of water, one of which is boiling and impetuous, which makes a lot of noise, and which however is not rough: the other gentle, without noise, calm, and yet very deep. Now even though this boiling of desires indeed seems good in beginners, it is nevertheless vicious in this state and must be cut off: [Admirable explanation] not that one must leave good desires, but the imperfection of these desires: not the one must quit them, but achieve them; not lose them, but purify and perfect them in God. As the seed is not lost in order to be cast into its place, but is changed and multiplied; as one sees with the grain of wheat, which is not lost in order to be thrown into the earth, but is changed and multiplied: in the same way the desires are not lost in order to be cast into God but are purified, multiplied and attained. And as the grain does not produce wheat, if it is not decomposed and deadened; so will the good desires never produce their results, namely union and transformation, if they are not cast into and accomplished in God. That is why Our Lord says: [John 12:24] If the grain of wheat does not fall to the ground and die, it remains but a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces fruit abundantly. And as at the beginning the grain is necessary, so at the end is its decomposition expedient to multiply the wheat; it is the same with the good desires and their annihilation in order to acquire the union of God. But as in such decomposition properly the grain is not said to be decomposed, but rather changed into wheat; so are these desires not properly annihilated, but rather changed and transformed in union. And however as this grain never comes back to itself, but remains always transformed or changed into wheat, as in its outcome, its final end and its perfection; so do the desires never come back, but remain transformed in union, as in their outcome and in the height of their perfection. But as one must not throw the grain everywhere at any time, but in its place and time; so must one not leave or annihilate these desires in any place, but only in God; nor in all exercises, but in the exercise of the union; nor at the beginning, but in its time, which is after the well practiced active life. [Acts Number 13] There one sees how those who think that they must always operate and produce fervent acts or aspiration are deceived: and still more those who value such a way to make the true union, and condemn the opposite as a bad thing, which puts the soul in vicious idleness; which is the opposite of the doctrine of St. Dennis cited above in the second Chapter; which is said again elsewhere: He cuts off all our intellectual operation in order to hurl us, when it is appropriate, into the sur-essential ray. All the Mystic Doctors say the same thing. But that will be spoken about in its place.

Now the soul having found this shortcoming and this hindrance in its path and in its union remedies it by an outflow of its fervors in God, not so that it does something, but so that it endures such operation in it. [Harphius. *Mystic Theology* Line 3, Part 4, Chapter 27]

This outflow of ardent desires in God is a change from practical love, to fruitful love; and is the final repose and the perfect accomplishment of the desires in God, where desire is absorbed and changed into possession. This word, outflow, contains two things, namely death and life; or loss and gain: because as long as fervor flows outside of the soul, it is lulled and dies, grows faint and is lost; but as long as it is lost in God it increases more and lives more than ever. That is why I do not say, annihilation, as if they were annihilated in God, but an outflow into God, as if preserved in him. Therefore I do not say a deprivation of desires, but, outflow, to show that they are no longer felt in the soul in order to be refined, and for the living and sweet operation of God in it, which changes [It is necessary that when the soul is transformed into God, everything is transformed with it.] the desires into the desired thing.

Now this change contains three things, namely a clear manifestation of the desired thing, a fulfilling of desire and a fading out of these desires. Concerning the first, this manifestation of the desired thing, which is God, does not come all at the same time, but little by little and by degrees, according to the growth of our love. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 5)

13. See above Number 12 for: (Non-Desire, Number 32.) (This is in the original twice.)

14. St. Francis de Sales: When then you are in this simple and pure filial confidence nearby Our Lord, remain there, my dear Theotime, without moving in the slightest, in order to perform sensory acts, not from understanding, nor from the will; for this simple love of confidence and this loving slumber of your spirit in the arms of the Savior, includes through excellence all that you seek here and there for your taste. It is better to sleep on this sacred chest than to remain awake elsewhere wherever that may be. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 8)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

15. Although we speak like this here and elsewhere, if it is about this noble and profound active sinking in the soul is not without [*Here he is speaking about remainder of activity.*] action, or without species formed on its part. But it is said that its action in this place is performed so subtly and under such subtle forms, that hardly does it notice them. Nevertheless it is true that the soul is not ignorant of its action, which is always performed with a simple desire, avid (eager) and always equally hungry to possess its Husband without dissimulation, not for the satisfaction of itself but for that of God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 19)

16. Now then no one is sufficiently disposed to or fitting to enter into the sur-eminent life, if he is not entirely restitute of his active power, in the most pure and most simple of this mystic path. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 22)

17. As for the active and reciprocal love between God and the soul, although it is a very great thing, and than has preceded these last and various results which are however last in such a way, that they have been totally changed for a long time, or to say it better, annulled as if they never existed, because of certain more vivid and greater attachments of love in all the powers of the soul, which produce wholly different effects in it. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 2)

18. All this pertains only to the perfectly dead, living a divine life; all this in him is beyond all distinction and difference. – He maintains and makes all this unique action last by supreme happiness beyond the reflex knowledge of all that is itself. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 4)

19. See Volume 2 SECTION 40 on Nakedness. Obscure (dark) faith.

20. About this, my dear Love, I will say that it is infinitely nobler and more profitable to act in you than to act for you; for in the first the intention is simple, which does not have as much regard for the works as for you in whom it does them. (Contemplation 38)

21. God henceforth [*Soul which carries Jesus Christ in its states.*] acts and suffers in them as it pleases him. They are with good reason and very willingly the living instruments of Our Lord, who is pleased to accomplish his work in them, making them by these means worthy of living in him within their depths over all eminence and possible penetration. (Letter 19)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

22. God being the only being of self, to him alone belongs operation in himself, immutably, eternally, infinitely; and outside of himself, and in his reasoning creatures to do what pleases him, freely communicating to them the being, liberty and operation, which is thus the being and the operation of God more than of the creature. (Book1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 6)

23. The soul rests in God, who remains hidden to it, as well as his action, which can be neither reflected nor perceived by an intuitive and precise knowledge.

It is true that in the Mediations and in the affirmative Conformations, love operates, and the running the will of the soul, it changes its life into that of the Beloved; so that it wants only what God wants, and wants all that he wants. But one must admit that the mystic acts of the Prayer of repose are more unifying and more transforming, and that even though there are several and different degrees of unifying love (charity), or several sorts of divine unions, the one which nevertheless is made by the acts of a mystic love, is so intimate and so immediate, [*Immediate union: act of a mystic love.*] that it seems alone among the others to merit absolutely, and by excellence, the title of a perfect union, I mean the actual and faithful correspondence to follow in prayer the attractions of the will of God; either by the production of acts when they are necessary for the maintenance and the preservation of prayer; or by the voluntary release of these same

acts, when it pleases God to give some quietude incompatible with good thoughts; because it is very certain that the negligence of producing acts of good thoughts and holy affection when one can or the too great eagerness to produce them when God wants to suspend them by his gentle operations in the depths of the spirit, are equally detrimental to the good of the soul and to its perfection. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 6)

24. When the soul is in a prayer of Meditation or affirmative Contemplation, that is to say, when it meditates and contemplates some perceived truth, it does not leave the acts because these sorts of meditations or contemplations, are acts of understanding or of will; but when it is in a dark (obscure) contemplation, in which it ignores what is given to it to contemplate, it then quits all ordinary acts and operations, to keep itself in a single mystic repose, which is to say it properly; a consent or complacency of obscure will not perceived in the Sovereign God. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 2, Section 4)

25. The prayer of savory repose does not have this desire to product acts, or to perform any prayer other than that of its said repose. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 7, Section 3)

26. In this savored enjoyment the soul feels an interior touch which prohibits it from performing any other prayer than that of resting; because this repose is a suspension of all other interior acts. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 7, Section 5)

27. Therefore do not torment yourself, poor souls, do no more [*How in drought and desertion one should not force oneself to produce acts.*] injury to yourself, to produce acts that the state of your barrenness often makes morally impossible for you; endure with a good heart that God strips you of them, so that in this interior disappropriation you may be able to enter into true poverty of spirit. (Book 1, Treatise 11, Chapter 2, Section 2)

28. They who always want to produce acts without practicing the Prayer of quietude, will never be able to arrive at this poverty of spirit that Our Lord has recommended so much, which the Mystics think so highly of, and which consists particularly of not being so much the lord over ones acts and satisfactions that one does not quit them easily when it thus pleases this same Lord who must dispose of them at his will. (Book 1, Treatise 2, Chapter 4, Section 1)

29. As for me, says St. Teresa (*Life*, Chapter 22) I believe that when in this Prayer of union, the soul in order to help itself, does something on its part, which seems to it somehow to advance it, nevertheless all will soon fall to earth, as if without foundation; and I doubt if it will reach true poverty of spirit. (Book 1, Treatise 2, Chapter 4, Section 4)

### SECTION 3 ANNIHILATION (DESTRUCTION)

#### SHORT METHOD

The soul must let itself be annihilated by the force of love. – How does one pass into God? This can only come about by going outside of ourselves in order to lose ourselves in him. Now that will never be achieved but by annihilation. (Chapter, Number 3)

The soul is put there in the truth of the All of God and of the nothingness of the creature. – We can honor the All of God only through our annihilation: and we are no sooner annihilated than God, who endures no emptiness without filling it, fills us with himself. (Chapter 20, Number 4)

#### CANTICLE

The knowledge of our Nothingness helps us to know the All of God: it is in this All of God that the Light necessary to clarify the abyss of the nothingness of the creature can be. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

If you want me to take up life in you, you must be in the last annihilation. (Chapter 2, Verse 1)

The valiant warriors are the Attributes, which surround the royal bed, and prevent entry to those who are not entirely annihilated. (Chapter 3, Verse 7)

The Husband calls it by the name of Wife and invites it to hasten; to let itself be destroyed and annihilated. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

One could not imagine the great fruits that a well annihilated soul would produce for the favor of men as soon as it applies itself to helping them. (Chapter 4, Verse 13)

God says that this soul, in which the spiritual marriage has been perfectly annihilated by its total annihilation and by its entire loss, is done in simplicity. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

It was in order to see the fruits of annihilation. (Chapter 6, Verse 10)

Not that it scorns or rejects the divine visits or consolations: no: it has too much respect and submission for the operation of God: but it is that these sorts of graces [That is to say, the sensory, distinct and perceived ones: the following part shows this.] are no longer right for a soul as annihilated as it is, and which is established in the enjoyment of the center. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

This soul remains in the hands of its Husband like things, which do not exit. This must be the effect of the deepest annihilation. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

#### AUTHORITIES

##### ST. DENNIS

1. Those who are well learned in the hierarchical mysteries, cannot ignore, it seems to me, that which is clear and known, namely, that those whose natures are gifted with spirit and understanding do not other wise obtain [*Note: this unchangeable habit can therefore be acquired.*] the unchangeable habit of divine resemblance if not by lifting oneself continually with attention and force of spirit toward the unity, and by mortifying and entirely annihilating all opposing things. (*On Hierarchy Ecclesiastes*, Chapter 2)

##### HENRY SUSO

2. We must lose ourselves in this nothingness, which is nothing other than God; so that God may be for us everything in all things. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 8)

3. Through the introversion, which loses us in this nothingness, we lose all distinction, not as for the essence; but to that, which appears to us. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 8)

4. The soul lost in this nothingness, does not know if it is this divine nothingness, or if it is creature, or even if it is united. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 9)

5. As soon as it becomes aware, that it knows and that it is contemplating this nothingness, it removes itself from it and reflects naturally on itself. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 9)

6. When someone is so highly raised above self that he no longer knows either himself or anything else, and that he is wholly asleep in the depths of the eternal nothingness, it is then that he is truly lost. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 10)



## THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

7. If I lose all feelings for myself, if I humble myself, if I annihilate myself, if I reduce myself to ashes and dust, as if that is all that I am; your grace will be favorable to me and your light will shine in my heart. (Book 3, Chapter 8, Section 1)

8. This light manifests itself like a nothingness, whose sublimeness obliges man to make all operation cease, defeated by the divine love. (*Mystic Theology*, Book 2, Chapter 58)

## ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

9. When the soul is annihilated, - it no longer operates, it no longer speaks, it no longer wants, - it has no feeling either within or without which can be moved, and in all things God is he who governs and guides it. (*In her Life*, Chapter 18)

10. God annihilates the soul; he remains alone, and the creature remains as if without a soul. -- God gives it taste and understanding as it pleases him. (Chapter 30)

11. Or if I could tell what I know and what I feel about this annihilation of the personal will, I am certain that everyone would abhor theirs as much as they abhor the Devil. (Chapter 31)

12. God gives the soul a certain interior occupation, in which he keeps it so sunk, that it seems to it that it is almost engulfed in a deep sea; and being occupied in such a great thing, it cannot perform its natural operation: but remaining annihilated and engulfed in this sea, it receives such a share of divine tranquility that it would be sufficient to relieve the pains of hell.

When the soul finds itself annihilated by the divine operation, it remains wholly transformed into God, who guides and moves and fills it in his fashion without human operation. Then who can imagine what this creature feels? If it could speak about it, its words would be so burning that hearts would be caught on fire by them. In this annihilation it knows that all will is pain, all intelligence is trouble, all memory is hindering; and it says: Oh love of poverty; kingdom of tranquility. (Chapter 31)

13. See Volume 2, SECTION 38 on Mortification, Number 1.

14. It is in this way that God acts with man, whom has been created for the end to be united to God and to be transformed into him. And all the same like with bread [*The saint expresses how this annihilation comes about by the comparison of the bread. Also see the one of the wood, which is changed into fire. (See Volume 2, SECTION 50 on Purification, Number 45)*] there are two parts, the one which is changed in substance, and the other which is flung outside as if a superfluous thing, also God separates and casts out from man all his evil instincts corrupted by the original sin which inclines him towards all evil; and the soul seeing its dangerous sickness, say: I have no other cure except what [*God must purify us himself in this way.*] God makes of me in completely the same as what I make of the bread when I ate it, of which my nature retains only the good substance and cast the rest outside, and in this way it remains nourished and healthy. (Chapter 32)

15. If God with his gentle means did not produce such a great effect in us, our proper side would not let itself be annihilated; it would defend itself as much as it could: but it is found at the command and disposition of God, who trims and cuts little by little the roots of the tree; and in this way he withers the branches of our evil inclinations, without man noticing; he sees only that he can no longer take pleasure in exterior things, and [*Abandon, resignation: that is all the soul knows in it.*] he feels no other good in self, except that he is contented that God does with him all which pleases him. (Chapter 32)

16. See Volume 2, SECTION 38 on Mortification, Number 3.

17. See Volume 1, SECTION 37 on Entire Death, Number 4.

18. See Volume 1, SECTION 2 on Acts, Number 2.

19. See Propriety, Number 13.

20. I am (says Love) still of a nature, that I convert and transform the souls into me, stripping them of themselves, and I never approve anything, which is not so annihilated so that it can be seen in itself, or feel anything other than pure love without any mixing: pure love wants to be alone. (Chapter 41)

21. See Joy of the Soul, Number 8.

ST. TERESA

22. Sometimes the multitude of these graces makes them more annihilated, and they fear that the same thing will happen to them as an overloaded boat that the excessive weight makes sink to the bottom -- they do not lack any crosses. (*Castle of the Soul VII Residence*, Chapter 3)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

23. I was reduced to nothingness, said David and I did not know. [Psalms 73:21 – “**Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.**” (KJV)] Because, as it has been said, the soul ignores where it goes: it finds itself annihilated for all the things on high and here below, that it had been used to tasting; it only sees itself seized by love without knowing how. (In his *Dark Night*, Book1, Chapter 11)

24. See Departure from Self, Number 14.

FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

25. There are two sorts of annihilation, the active and the passive. – The passive comes about when the person and all things are annihilated, faded and died away: we call it passive, because one suffers this annihilation, which has been spoken about up to now. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 11)

26. Passive annihilation is, when no feeling nor image of creatures remains: the active is when there is some image or feeling; but still knows by this light that they are nothing; the one consists of experimental knowledge, seeing oneself reduced to nothing as it is written: I am reduced to nothingness: the other consists of the true knowledge not experimental according to the sense; but according to understanding.

Of these two annihilations, the active is the more perfect, because it annihilates all things with itself not only when it is aided by the actual attraction of this will or divine essence, but also when the person is in barrenness: it annihilates them as much when they remain, as when they do not remain, and they vanish: it even annihilates that which annihilates things, namely its spirit and its knowledge with all its operation, and does not permit some feeling or image to remain, but God alone. The active annihilation is even more perfect because of its force; because neither the multitude of exterior affairs nor the multiplicity of intellectual operations is capable of either preventing or distracting this annihilation. -- It annihilates things, not only when the soul is elevated above itself; but also when it is collected inside of itself, watching them as if not watching them: throughout the active annihilation is continued and exerted in all. – The passive annihilation awaits the actual attraction of God. –

These two annihilations serve as the two loves of enjoyment and of practice, which include all spiritual life. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 11)

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

27. See Non-Desire, Number 35.

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

28. For those who are truly dead, I say that it is infinitely more to be entirely annihilated than to be entirely dead; for death is the entry to annihilation. But good God! What are we saying; of what and to who are we speaking since so few people find themselves entirely dead? No matter, let us say that those who are truly annihilated according to the last and supreme state, remain from there even more unknown and ignored because they are different from other mystic saints. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9)

29. Passive annihilation is, when, either on the inside, or on the outside, there is no operation of the soul other than to watch and contemplate God purely in repose: and they call such passive action most appropriate; because all this time we only make the divine action last in force, joy, and repose of spirit.

On the opposite side they call it active annihilation when all the necessary works that we perform seem to us to be nothing, as if they had never been. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 3)

30. But those who are annihilated by infinite love in their eternal Object, their glory and their enjoyment after this life in all fullness of accomplishment and in the overwhelming overflowing of all fullness, will be all the more noble and excellent in love (clarity), because the love (clarity) of the Sun surpasses the glow of a very small candle. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Chapter 4)

31. Since God certainly condescended to take pleasure in annihilating us in him, and to ourselves, and since by these means he satisfied his love, we must in order to satisfy him in everything remain annihilated by him and in him and by us in our total: without valuing our reflections which do and are nothing of us, because of our whole and perfect transfusion in all the vastness of God, in which we are, we are moved, and live the same divine life, which is the cause of our paradise here below. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 10)

## SECTION 4 CENTER, DEPTHS OF THE SOUL

### SHORT METHOD

The living faith of God present in the bottom of our hearts, must bring us to thrust ourselves strongly in to ourselves, collecting all the senses within, preventing them from spreading without: which is a great way from the outset, to get rid of a quantity of distractions, and to remove oneself from the object of the outside, in order to approach God, who can be found [I mean God himself and not his gifts which are received in the powers.] only in the depths of ourselves and in our center, which is the Sancta Sanctorum where he lives. (Chapter 2, Number 2)

This manner of turning oneself within is very easy, and advances the soul without effort and completely naturally; because God is our center. The center always has a very strong attractive virtue; and the more the center is eminent and spiritual, the more its attraction is violent and impulsive, without being able to be stopped.

Besides the attractive virtue of the center, all creatures are given a strong yearning for reunion with their center, so that the more spiritual and perfect ones have this yearning more strongly.

As soon as a thing is turned to the side of its center, unless it is stopped by some invincible obstacle, it rushes there with extreme speed. A stone in the air is no sooner detached and turned toward the earth, than it goes toward there by its own weight as if toward its center. It is the same way with water and fire, which not being stopped, rush continually to their center.

Now I say that the soul by the effort that it has exerted in order to collect itself within, being turned in central part, without any effort other than the weight of love, falls little by little into the center: and the more it remains peaceful and tranquil, without being moved [Note itself: but the less it is moved by itself, the more it lets itself be moved to the liking of God.] by itself; the more it advances with speed, because it gives more room to this attractive and central virtue to pull it strongly. (Chapter 11, Number 2 & 3)

As soon as the soul is in central part, that is to say, returned within itself by recollection, starting this moment it is in a very strong action, which is a course of the soul toward its center, which attracts it, and which infinitely surpasses the speed of all the other actions, nothing equaling the speed of the central part. (Chapter 21, Number 2)

When the soul is turned within itself in the said manner, it is in central part, and it has a strong inclination to the union; this inclination is the beginning. Next it sticks, which comes about when it approaches more closely to God: then it is united to him: and next it becomes one, which is to become one same spirit with him; and it is then that this spirit comes from God returns in its end. [Loss in God our end and origin.] (Chapter 21, Number 8)

Heaven represents the depths and the center of the soul, where all must be in silence when the Majesty of God appears there. (Chapter 24, Number 1)

### CANTICLE

Enjoying God is permanent and lasting; because it is within us; and because God being our last goal, the soul can incessantly flow out into him as if in its term and center, and be blended and transformed there. ---

One must still observe that God in creating us gave us, a share of his being, fitting to be reunited to him; and at the time an inclination toward this reunion. He gave something similar to the human body with regard to man in the state of innocence, drawing it from man himself, in order to give him this yearning for the union, as if for his origin: But that being between very material bodies, this union can be only material and extremely limited. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

This young mistress prays to the Husband to pull through the center of its soul, as if she were not satisfied by the gentleness of the balm spread in the powers: for she already penetrates by the grace of her Husband, who always attracts her more strongly, that there is an enjoyment of himself more noble and more intimate than what it is tasting at present. It is what brings her to make this request to her Husband. Pull me, she says, into the most intimate part of my depths: so that my powers and senses may as well run to you through this [Path beyond feelings.] more profound; although less sensitive path. Pull me, I say, oh my divine Lover, and we run to you through recollection, which makes us feel this divine force, through which you attract us to yourself. In running we will follow a certain scent that your attraction gives off. -- We will even pass beyond this scent in order to get all the way to you as if at the center of our happiness. (Chapter 1, Verse 3)

The sacred Husband is always in the center of the soul which is faithful to him; but often he remains so hidden there, that she who possesses this happiness, almost always ignores him, except for at certain moments when it pleases him to make himself sensed by the loving soul, which then discovers him in self in an intimate and profound way. At present he makes use of it in this way toward the most pure of his Mistresses, so that what she is going to say testifies to it. When my King, he who governs and guides me in Sovereign, was in his bed, which the depths and the center of my soul [The center of the soul is the bed of repose of the Loved One], where he takes his repose (rest); my nard, which is my faithfulness, spread its scent in such a gentle and pleasant manner that it obliged him to be made known to me: then I recognized that he was resting in me like in his royal bed; which I had ignored beforehand; for although he was there, I did not notice him there. (Chapter 1, Verse 11)

The Husband embraces his Mistress, and he is in her. He surrounds her on the outside, and he penetrates her on the inside: she feels that in this mystic slumber he is thrust into her, that he unites himself to her, not only as at other times, through the powers, which are hills; but passing beyond the hills, he comes on the mountain, which is the center: and there he touches her truly with his immediate union. She certainly feels that this touch is very different from that of the powers, and he produces very great results for her, although this is a fleeting touch, which is not yet the permanent and lasting union. (Chapter 2, Verse 8)

One must pass beyond all things in order to enter with me into the bosom of my Father, and rest yourself there without surroundings and by the loss of all means: the immediate and central union being made only above all created things. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

## AUTHORITIES

1. St. Dennis: See Divine Motion Number 2.

2. St. Catherine of Genes: The instinct of the soul toward God, who is infinitely, cannot be compared to the instinct of the body toward earthly things, which are finite; and when this instinct of the soul toward God is not hindered, it is so great and so strong, that there is nothing, which has such a great vehemence or impulsiveness. (*Life* Chapter 48)

3. The Blessed John of the Cross: Pierce the center of my soul.

All the more that this feast of the Holy Spirit happens in the substance of the soul, which neither the Devil, nor the world, nor the senses could reach, all the more is the soul secure, substantial and delicious because it is interior: because the more it is interior, the more it is pure: and the more it has purity, the more God communicates himself often, abundantly and generally. -- And all the more because the soul could not operate naturally and by its own industry, if it is not through the means and the help of the corporeal senses, from which is this case it is very free and very removed, from this comes that all its occupation is only to receive from God who alone in the depths or center of the soul can move it, and operate there without the intervention of the senses. And thus all the movements of this soul are divine [Short Method Chapter 21, Section 6], and even though they are from God, they are also from it, because God makes them in it with it, which contributes to this with its will and its consent. And all the more because by saying that he knocks at the deepest center of its soul, it gives to understand that it has other centers, which are not so deep, we must see how this happens. Now firstly one must know, that the soul in so far as spirit, has neither high part, nor low part, nor anything deeper or less deep in its being, like the bodies which have quantity: for seeing that there are no parts in it, or any difference of the inside from the outside, since it is in all one way, it has no center deeper or less deep, nor can be enlightened more in one part than in the other, like natural bodies, but only in one way. But let us leave this meaning of center or material depth, there where its being and its virtue can reach, and the force of its operation and movement, and from where it cannot pass beyond: in the same way that the fire or the stone which have the natural movement and the force to reach the center of their sphere, and cannot go further, nor miss making it there, if not by some opposing hindrance. Following that we will say that the stone when it is on earth, is as if in its center because it is in the sphere of its activity and its movement, which is the element of the earth; but it is not at the deepest part of this one, which is the environment of the earth; because it still has the force to descend down to there, if one removes the obstacles which are between them; and when it arrives there and no longer for itself has the virtue of moving, we will say that it is at the deepest center.

Now God is the [God and that which concerns him is wholly interior in so far as what depth there is in us and in all things, it is God. That is why St. Gregory of Nazianze in his Poetry calls him the center of things. Father Surin: *Foundation of Spiritual Life* Book 11, Chapter 1] center of the soul, which having reached by its being; and by all the force of its operation, it has arrived at its last and deepest center, which will be when with all its forces it loves, understands and enjoys God: and when it has not yet attained this, even though through grace and divine communication it may be in God, who is still its center, if it has force and movement for more, and even though it may not be satisfied, although it is in the center, it is not in the deepest part, because it can still continue further. Love unites the soul with God, and all the more will it have degrees of love, will it enter more deeply into God. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 1, Verse 3)

4. St. Francis of Sales: At other times the union is made not by repeated thrusts, but by way of a continual perceptible squeezing and advancement of the heart into divine Goodness: for as we see that a great and heavy mass of lead, bronze or stone, although it is not pushed, is squeezed, thrust and pressed so much against the earth on which it is positioned, that finally with time it is found completely buried because of the inclination of its weight, which through its heaviness makes it always tend to the center; in this way our heart being once joined to its God, if it remains in this union for a long time, and nothing diverts it away, it goes on continually thrusting [My love is my weight. St. Augustine. *Confessions* Book 13, Chapter 9] by an imperceptible progress of union until it is wholly in God, because of the sacred inclination that holy love gives it to be always more united to the sovereign Goodness. (*On the Love of God* Book 7, Chapter 1)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

5. It is a strange thing, that men ignore the point of and the proper practices for their infinite happiness, and that they do not in the slightest know what are their depths, and the loving cult there. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 14)

6. But when man has arrived at his center, then like a loving eagle he rests with very great pleasure in God. Divine enjoyment occupies him in fullness of delights in a most subtle, most simple and most spiritual manner, and most often above [To pass beyond oneself, which is called going outside of self.] oneself, above all senses and all perception. While he remains in his sole industry he is much removed from his entire loss and resolution, and his occupation toward God, is very removed from their center. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 23)

7. All the states which precede this one are deduced by the Mystics: but this one contains them all in a divine enough manner; through which one sees oneself and feels melted and reduced to a very small point, which is the sole center, from which all the lives which can be conceived of are pulled. That which falls under feeling, and under simple and specific perception, seems to show that which is created, in an excellent manner, rather than the uncreated where we are fixed: which keeps us purely attached over all love, in nakedness and unique simplicity and completely sur-essential; over all the aforementioned effects of the divine fire, which embraced and consummated the whole soul in self at the time of its action. So that the soul having arrived here, finds nothing to say or think, not even to express what it saw or felt in the preceding states, and gets much less in this one. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 7)

8. Monsieur Olier: The Husband finally receiving the Wife surrendered to his power by the right and by the justice of his condition, delivers himself on his side unto her through love, giving her all power over him, saying to his dear Wife, what he said to God his Father: [John 17:10 (KJV) – “**And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.**”] all I have is yours, and all you have is mine; so that he is everything to the soul, like the soul is everything to him. – The Wife next must remain in peace in her depths, living always subject to the orders of the Husband, and always prepared to respond with faithfulness to the plans of his power. (Letter 12)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

9. In this prayer the will rests in God through sympathy rather than through knowledge of the conformity that there is between them and their center: thus iron is attracted by the magnet without knowing the conformity that it has with the other. The same thing happens to the will when it is held in repose without knowing in what. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 10, Section 2)

10. The will, says Barbancon, being the noblest power of our soul, is also the one, which has in its center and in the most intimate part of its depths the real presence and the immediate attendance of the divine Being. (*Secret Paths of Divine Love* Part 11, Chapter 15) (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 10, Section 5)

11. Taulere says that the very agreeable Trinity shines in the interiors and flows out intimately into the bottom, which has neither name nor images; in this bottom the spirit finds itself without form as if engulfed in the immensity of God. (Canticle 4) (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 10, Section 2)

12. If ever, he says again, we want to reach the depths of God, we must beforehand penetrate down to our own intimate depths [The Author of the Mystic Day deals with the Depths of souls in the 6<sup>th</sup> Treatise of his third Book.] with pure humility. (Sermon 1 of the Fourth Sunday after the Kings.) he calls it elsewhere depths of the Divinity; eternal depths. The noblest portion of the soul, he says (Sermon 1 of the Thirteenth Sunday after the Trinity.) rests in the depths of the Divinity, from where it has flown out; and he who never looks at or tastes of his depths, will never taste of he who is eternal. He also says (Sermon 1 Trinity) that God is the depth of good people and their intention, and (Sunday 19 after the Trinity) this portion has a certain essential object above the operation of the powers. (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 8, Section 5 and Chapter 9, Section 1)

13. The marriage of the soul with God is at the center and the engagement only in the superior part, that is to say the middle part, preferring the center to the other parts. (from St. Teresa) (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 1)

14. Abstraction, solitude, and a serious application to the interior man is necessary to those who, like Magdalene, aspire to repose; and when they are occupied by exterior exercises they must retire to the inside with their senses and all which is in them, to be gathered, united and engulfed in the depths of their souls: the dignity of such souls can be neither conceived of, nor explained. (Taulere, Sermon 3 from the Epiphany) (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 1)

15. The depths of the soul, says a great Contemplative, are the capacity of the spirit to be wholly converted into God and its actual conversion into him. (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 4)

16. God, says St. Teresa (*Chastisement of the Soul Dem. V* Chapter 1), has only to make one open the doors of our depths to him in order to enter there. She says, that the cellar is the center of our soul, and that we cannot enter there by our own diligence: but that the Majesty of God is that which must introduce us there, and he wants on our part only an entire submission of our will: - without opening any door he enters into the center of our soul, like formerly in the place where the Disciples were, when he told them: [John 20:21, 26] My peace be with you. (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 6)

17. The soul can prevent this divine operation in three ways. The first is by images and thoughts; because when God gives it some prayer of quietude, which is not compatible with good thoughts, if it does not leave them, it suffocates in it the operation of God, which wants to suspend our acts by this gentle operation. – Secondly, by sin or immortification (*Immortification defined: Failure to mortify the passions.*) – Thirdly, by failure to keep faithful correspondence with the production of acts when they are necessary for the maintenance and the cooperation of prayer of quietude. (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 8)

18. St. Teresa speaking about the union that God operates in the depths of the soul, says (*Life* Chapter 16) that in this state it remains with great gain; because God operates in it without anyone preventing it, or itself, because God is more master of its depths than itself. (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 8)

SECTION 5  
SHORT METHOD  
This way is the shortest.

SHORT METHOD

What one then wishes for the souls, is that they are advanced toward their end; and that they take the shortest and easiest way. (Chapter 24, Number 9)

AUTHORITIES

ST. TERESA

1. Although we have only just begun and are still most wretched, let us endeavor to consider this continually and to be aroused to loving; for if Our Lord gives us once this grace that this love is imprinted in our heart, all things will be easy for us, and we will do much in a very short time, and without any work. His divine Majesty gives us this grace, because he knows how important it is to us, and since he grants it to us by the love that he has brought to us and by his glorious son and who made it appear to us so strongly at his expense. (*Life* Chapter 22)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

2. The sole and unique love animates all the concurrent virtues, is the shortest and safest path to introduce and advance you in spirit in these pure and unique depths, where God resides for self and for you. (Letter 50)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

3. St. Bonaventure: Just like each new disciple ascends by degrees to the perfection of this science (namely Mystic Theology) so well that he practices firstly with a great study and work in purgative life, which is the elementary path of beginners; and after a little time, that is to say one or two months, if it seems expedient to him following the ray of divine light that he is elevated to love by meditating. That if it perhaps seems a presumption to someone, that the soul enveloped in several sins dares to ask Jesus Christ for the union of love, that he may think in himself that there is not danger. (Preface to *Mystic Theology*) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 11, Chapter 21, Section 2)

4. I wanted to write this so that those who are less experienced in this wisdom, (the path being strengthened) direct their paths there knowing that it is found in a short time. That if at the beginning of the purgation or of the ecstatic (elevation) one feels a wonderful difficulty, if nevertheless it may be that tormented by few things, they will soon be inclined in several; so that they will see by experience all that the eye has not seen, or the ear heard, which has not ascended to the heart of man. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 3) In the same place.

5. St. Teresa: if we did our best to detach ourselves from all the things of the earth, and all our care and conversation were in heaven, I believe without doubt that this good would be given to us in a short time, if in a short time we wholly inclined ourselves to it as some Saints did. (*Life* Chapter 11) In the same place.

6. One of the people who ordered me to write this, has been much more advanced by Our Lord in four months, than I was in seventeen years: so he is more disposed to it than I am; that is why he waters this orchard with four kinds of water, although the last kind is only given to him drop by drop, with the result that God helping it will soon be engulfed by the water. (*Life* Chapter 11)

7. In a short time he has acquired a great experience of spiritual things; gifts that God gives when he wants and how he wants, with respect to either time or services: I am not saying that this is not very useful; but that often Our Lord does not give in twenty years the contemplation that he gives to others on one year; his Majesty knows the reason for it. (*Life* Chapter 34 speaking about her Confessor.)

8. Someone will perhaps think that in order to arrive at these residences, it is necessary to have stayed a long time in the previous ones; and even though ordinarily one must have remained in those about which I just spoke, it is not however a certain rule, as you have already heard often, in so far as Our Lord gives these graces when it pleases him, as he wants, and to whom he wants, as goods which belong to him, for he does no harm to anyone. (IV Dem. Chapter 1)

9. I saw some souls, one of which, I remember, to which Our Lord in three days gave so many goods: that if the experience of the several years that he gave it practice, joined with that it has always improved did not make it believe, I would hold the thing as impossible. Another received them in three months; and both of them were very young. I saw others, for which God did this favor after a long time: and what I said about these two people, I could say about the others: something which I am warning about, because I wrote that there are few souls which receive these favors without having endured toils for several years, so that one nevertheless knows that there are some. Neither limit nor measures must be given to such a Great Lord who is so desirous of doing favors. (*Conception of the Soul of Dem.* Chapter 6)

10. St. Gregory: The grace of contemplation is not granted to the great and refused to the lesser; but often those who are the greatest often those who are the smallest, more often those who are distanced and sometimes those who are conjoined receive it. (Homily 17 on Ezekiel)

11. Suarez: Contemplation is not so proper for perfect men as a great part of it cannot be tasted by the imperfect, indeed even beginners; then some share of this contemplation is sometimes also granted to beginners through a special grace, ordinarily like I think, [Note: if they do what is in them] if they do what is in them. (*On Prayer* Book 2, Chapter 11)

12. Albarado: It is a great mistake to think that contemplation is only for those who are very perfect and advanced, and not for those who are beginning. (*Art of Living Well* Book 1, Chapter 15)

13. Nicholas of Jesus-Maria concludes: From these things it is consistent and evident that those people err much and hinder the spiritual advancement of souls, who without competent examination and real consideration, disapprove of the contemplation of those who have not been long trained in the study of prayer, or who are still sullied with some imperfections in the spiritual path and the exercise of the virtues; as if this grace of contemplation were accorded only to certainly perfect men, or after an appropriate length of time spent in meditations. These people, I say, who judge the matter in this way, without doubt come close to and can hinder quite a bit the gain of the others; for according to the Holy Fathers and Mystic Doctors, that we have given accounts of, this long delay and great perfection are not always required; but often this comes about in a very short time, according to the doctrine of our Mystic Doctor (John of the Cross) and the Fathers explained in Section 1 of this Chapter.



SECTION 6  
SEEKING GOD IN SELF  
REIGN OF GOD IN US

SHORT METHOD

It is necessary for them [It is said about those who do not know how to read.] to learn a fundamental truth, which is that [Luke 17:21 (KJV) – “. . . for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”] the Kingdom of God is inside of them, and that is there that one must seek it. (Chapter 3, Number 1)

That they may thus then say their “Father,” understanding a little of what they say, and believing that God, who is inside of them, certainly wants to be their Father. (Chapter 3, Number 2)

The soul by means of meditation is turned wholly into itself in order to occupy itself with God who is present there. If it turns all its vigor and its force within it, it separates itself from the senses with this single action, and employing all its force and its vigor on the inside, it leaves the senses without vigor: and the more it advances toward and approaches God, the more it is separated from itself. (Chapter 10, Number 2)

It finds that God is more in it than itself. It has only a single thing to do in order to find him, which is, to plunge into itself. As soon as it closes its eyes, it finds itself taken and placed in prayer. (Chapter 13, Number 1)

The Kingdom of God is inside of us. This Kingdom is understood in two ways. The first is, when God is such a strong Master of us, that nothing resists him any longer: then our interior is truly his Kingdom. The other way is, that possessing God, who is our Sovereign Good, we possess the Kingdom of God, who is the height of happiness, and the end for which we have been created, thus is it said, to serve God is to reign. (Chapter 2, Number 5)

CANTICLE

I did not keep my vine (vineyard), which is my depths, where my God lives. (Chapter 1, Verse 5)

Then I recognized that he was resting in me, as if in his royal bed, which I had overlooked beforehand; for although he was there, I was not aware of him. (Chapter 1, Verse 11)

Jesus Christ makes himself a throne in each soul that he decorates with much magnificence in order to make out of it the place of his residence as well as of his repose and his eternal delights, and to reign there sovereignly after having acquired it at the expense of his blood and sanctified by his graces. For in the same way that God reigns in Jesus Christ, so does Jesus Christ reign in pure hearts, where he no longer finds anything which resists him, nor that displeases him: which is to [Luke 22:29-30] prepare his Kingdom for us, and to make us participants in his Royalty, in the way that his Father had prepared his Kingdom for him and communicated his Royalty to him. This throne then of the King of Kings, is made with trees of Lebanon; it is the natural foundation of man, which serves as base and foundation for the spiritual edifice. (Chapter 3, Verse 9)

AUTHORITIES

1. The Kingdom of God is inside of you, says the Lord. Convert yourself [Conversion. The first step is to turn oneself to the inside with all ones heart. By turning oneself to God one inevitably quits the world; and then repose and tranquility are found.] to him with all your heart, and leave this miserable world; and your heart will find repose. Learn to scorn all exterior things and do not apply yourself to interior ones; and you will see that the Kingdom of God will come into you. For the Kingdom of God is the peace and the joy that one tastes in the Holy Spirit, and is not given to the impious. [The impious never taste this chaste and delicious peace.]

Jesus Christ will come to you, and will make you feel the gentleness of these consolations, if you prepare for him inside of yourself a residence worthy of him. All the glory and the beauty that this heavenly Husband loves, is inside of the soul; and it is there that it takes his delights. (Book 2, Chapter 1, Section 1)

2. To follow God inside of self, and to have no attachment or affection for all which is on the outside, is properly the state of an interior and spiritual man. (Book 2, Chapter 6, Section 3)

ST. TERESA

3. See then, that St. Augustine says, that he sought God in various places, and that he found him inside of himself. Do you think it is a thing of little importance for a soul which is scattered and distracted easily, to hear this truth, and to see that in order to speak to its eternal Father and to be recreated or consoled with him, it does not need to go to heaven, nor to cry out loud? he is so near us that however low one speaks to him, he will hear us: it also does not need wings to look for him, but only to put itself in solitude and to watch him inside of self. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 28)

4. Now taking up again the subject that I had begun, I would like to be able to explain how this holy companionship is with he who accompanies us, who is the Saint of Saints, without however hindering the solitude that he and his wife possess, when the soul inside of self wants to enter into this paradise with its God, and when it pulls the door after itself, closing it to all the things of the world: I say, when it wants; because one must know that this is not entirely a supernatural thing, but it depends on our will and we can do it, helped by divine favor. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 29)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of,

5. Albert the Great: Do not worry a lot about actual devotion and sentient gentleness or fears; but by the good will in the understanding be only in spirit united with God inside of you. (*On Attachment to God* Chapter 10 & *Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 11, Chapter 7, Section 2)

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

6. O God says the soul in imitation of St. Augustine, where I went looking for you, most infinite Beauty, I looked for you outside, and you were in the middle of my heart. Imagine, Theotime, the most holy Virgin Our Lady, when she had conceived the Son of God, her sole love; the soul this beloved Mother was gathered wholly without doubt near this beloved Child, and because this divine was in her sacred bowels, all the faculties of her soul withdrew into it. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 7)

## SECTION 7 FALL. CAUSE OF THE FALL

### CANTICLE

The property of the essential union [I am not speaking about the kiss on the mouth: I put that in the article of Spiritual Marriage.] is to strengthen the soul in such a way, that it can no longer have these failings which happen to beginning souls, in which the grace was still weak, they feel eclipses and still make falls: but through this [See the article Union] union the soul is confirmed, (if this term can be used) in charity; since it then remains in God; [I John 4:16] and he who remains in God, remains in love; for God is love. (Chapter 2, Verse 6)

This soul is not so well established in its state in God, that it cannot still cast some glances on itself: it is an infidelity, but which is rare, and which only comes from weakness. The Husband permitted his Wife to make this slight mistake [Note that if the Husband cannot endure the slightest imperfection, how could this state be compatible with mortal sin?], in order to teach us through this the damage that personal reflection causes in the most advanced states; it has therefore for a moment returned into itself, under the best pretexts in the world: it was to see there the fruits of the annihilation if the vine (vineyard) was flourishing, if it was advancing, if its charity was fertile: did that not seem most just and most reasonable? (Chapter 6, Verse 10)

That if by an infidelity as difficult as disastrous this Wife came [One will notice, that one can therefore fall, although it may be very difficult, because of the habit, that the soul has taken up to be not converted; but united, transformed into its divine Object, source of purity and innocence.] to withdraw herself from her subjection, she would from this moment on be cast out of him as if into a hell, by the excess of his indignation. (Chapter 8, Verse 6)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. The people by their own movement and evil inclination fell from the upright elevation which carried and guided them to God: which happened to them [Cause of the fall, self love, complacency, estimation of their sufficiency.] because of a too great love and complacency that they had of themselves by an excessive estimation of their own self sufficiency. (*Hierarchy heavenly* Chapter 9)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

2. They that are in this state, either beginners or profiteers, indeed even the perfect, are not without stain. On the contrary, I say that the Husband takes an extreme pleasure in training the souls of his Wives variously by falls [not serious, but of all common frailty] for fear of seeing them elevate themselves and swelling up from haughtiness and self love, from what they received from him, and what they are in him. he prefers their falls, not as fall, but because of what they produce, which is profound humility, abnegation, rectitude, stability in the simple and loving union with him: and one must certainly believe that he would never permit them to fall, if it were not for this reason. For his Majesty who desires in that itself only his glory, wants to be fully satisfied in all these encounters by the renunciation and abnegation of his Wives, - which are raised again from these falls with the same love as if they were not {toubees}. – Even though it may happen that you fall several times a day, you must always relinquish yourself with the same confidence into this divine Husband.

This practice is important, and the renunciation that one must practice here is profound and subtle; for this renunciation must be such that it acts and produces its effect always at the opportunities, in the most pure, abstracted and separated part of the soul, which is the pure spirit: and this pure, simple and subtle renunciation consists of being entirely lost to oneself in a non-power, in a not-wanting, in the not living, in the not dying without being permitted to search for oneself from however far away that may be. That is soon said; but the practice of this point seems inaccessible. Could there ever be found any souls faithful enough to their Husband, who remains only for themselves, forever unknown to men, when it is a question of their justification and their sufferings in the occasions, which concern their ordinary well being? (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 18, Number 3)

3. It is in this sense that human falls are more useful and fruitful to the children of the spirit, not as such, but as excellently and totally extinguished by a vigorous exercise of love: in such a way that they lose none of their previous luster; on the contrary they increase it more and more to the very great pleasure of God, by their active fidelity, which makes them prefer a thousand times to die than to wallow on earth, that is to say, among the senses and the creatures, however excellent they may be. But flowing and running out actively and ardently, they lose themselves there irretrievable in the abundance of the ineffable joy of God in whom they are totally swallowed. (*Mirrored Flames of Love* Chapter 3)

## SECTION 8 COMMUNICATIONS. CONVERSATIONS

There are two sorts of communication; one is that of God to the soul, which is certainly spoken about in the other Writings more than in this one. The other one is the communication of pure and simple spirits between themselves, about which I have also written much elsewhere.

### SHORT METHOD

The soul finds that God is more in it than itself. – Inside of it a conversation takes place that the exterior does not interrupt. (Chapter 13, Number 1)

### CANTICLE

The essential union and the kiss on the mouth are the spiritual marriage where there is a union of essence to essence and communication of substances [Note that the essential union is inevitable accompanied by a substantial communication.]: where God takes the soul as his Wife and unites himself to it; neither personally nor by some act or means, but immediately, reducing all into unity and possessing it in his unity itself. Then it is the kiss on the mouth and real and perfect possession. It is an enjoyment, which is not sterile, nor unfruitful; since it is extended to nothing less than to the communication of the Word of God to the soul. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

Fertility is given to it: it is put by condition into the Apostolic life; from then on the lips of this person are like a ray of honey which continually exudes in favor of the souls. These are only his lips, and not his words, because it is the Husband who speaks through his Wife, and the lips of his Wife [Under the name of Wife are included all the soul (of this state) without any discrimination of sex.] serve as an organ for him to express his divine word. (Chapter 4, Verse 11)

O Shulamite, temple of peace, come back to teach us, and by your words, and by your examples, the path that must be followed to reach the happiness that you possess: come back, so as to be our guide, our support and our consolation: finally come back to take us with you. (Chapter 6, Verse 12)

It has the force and the terror of an army; because it is associated with the most holy Trinity, and it has a share of the divine Attributes, where are armed to fight and destroy in its favor all the enemies of God. (Chapter 7, Verse 1)

If this mother so rich and so wise, condescends to accept me as her daughter, I will feel [These effects are felt, because God lives in this soul. As one sees iron touched by a magnet attract more iron, so does a soul in whom God lives in this way, attract other souls by a secret virtue; so that it is sufficient to approach it in order to be put into prayer and in meditation; that is what makes it so that as soon as one nears it, one feels like being silent more than speaking, and God makes use of this means to communicate himself to the souls: sign of the purity of these unions and affections.] the effects of the unction of the Husband who is in her. The fruit of his word will be for me like a bunch of grapes of exquisite sweetness, and the purity of his maxims will perfume me with his scent. (Chapter 7, Verse 8)

O Wife, will I say it? That you have a part of the commerce of the most holy Trinity since you receive constantly, and you perpetually return what you receive. (Chapter 8, Verse 2)

She abounds wholly in delights, because she is so over filled and full of them that like a sink overfilled by waters from its source, it overflows on all side, to share with the others. (Chapter 8, Verse 5)

He also invites her to speak to the souls about interior things, and teach them what they must do in order to be agreeable to him. It is one of the principle functions of the Wife to instruct and teach the interior to the friends of the Husband, who do not have as much access to him as his Shulamite. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

Even though in this state she may be more suitable than ever to help the souls, and she serves those that her Husband addresses to her with extreme care; she is however incapable of desiring to help others, and can only do it by a particular order from providence. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

### AUTHORITIES

Section 1: Communications of God to the soul.

### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

1. Keep this secret for us, that is to say, say nothing about it, as you were accustomed to beforehand when the communications that you were making in me were of the sort that you told them to the exterior senses, being things which they were not capable of; because they were not so lofty and so profound that they could certainly not attain

them: But at present I desire them to be so sublime, so substantial and so intimate, that I beseech you to tell them nothing about them, and that they may not be capable of them; because the substance cannot be communicated to the senses, and thus that which can fall in the senses is not essentially God. The soul then desiring the essential communication from God which does not fall into the senses, asks him for this to be in such a way that it tells them nothing about it, that is to say, that he does not communicate himself in such a base and exterior fashion that the senses can attain it. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 33)

2. This skill that the souls asks for in order to be able to love perfectly, is called here a breeze of wind, because it is a very delicate touch and feeling that the soul feels at the time of the communication of the Holy Spirit, which by the way of breathing eminently, and by this its breath, elevates the soul high and forms it, so that breaths into God a very lofty aspiration of love, similar to that which the Father breaths into the Son and the Son into the Father, who is the Holy Spirit, which is given to him in the said transformation; all the more because this would not be a genuine transformation, if the soul were not also united and transformed to the Holy Spirit, although not in an evident and elevated degree because of the baseness and vileness of this life; which is to the soul such a great glory and delight that there is no mortal language which one proclaim it, nor any human understanding can understand it: but the soul united and transformed in God, breaths into God a most lofty breath similar to the divine one, that God being in it breaths into itself as his exemplar; which is what St. Paul, according to what I understand, wanted to signify when he said: [Galatians 4:6] Now as proof that you are children of God, God sent the Spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba Father. Which happens to the perfect people in the above said manner. It is nothing to be amazed at that the soul can arrive at such a lofty thing: For supposing that God does it this favor of arriving at being deiform and united in the most holy Trinity, why is it unbelievable that it operates its work of understanding and direction and love in the Trinity conjointly with the same Trinity, and that with a great resemblance to this one, however in a shared manner, God operating that in it? Now as that comes about, there is no power, nor wisdom, which can proclaim it, if it is not by showing how the Son of God obtained and earned for us this lofty state and this sublime place, when he said to his Father in St. John; [John 17:20-24] My Father, those whom you have given to me, I want them to be with me wherever I may be, namely, doing the same work as me through participation; and furthermore he says: Now I am not praying only for them, speaking about those who were then present, but also they who must believe in me by their word: that they may all be one thing, in the way that you, my Father, are in me and me in you, that they may also be one thing in us; so that the world believes that you have sent me. And I gave them the clearness that you gave to me, so that they may be one as we are one, me in them and you in me, so that they may be perfect in one, and that the world may know that you have sent me, and that you have loved them like you have loved me, which is my communicating to them the same love that he communicated, to the Son, although it is not naturally like to the Son, but like we said, by unity and transformation of love: as also it is not understood here, that the Son says to his Father that the Saints are one thing essentially and naturally like the Father and the Son are; but he only wants them to be so through the union of love, like the Father and the Son are in unity of love. From where it comes that the souls possess the same goods through sharing; as him through nature; that is why they are truly God through participation. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 39)

3. See Union Number 57.

4. These caves of powers being already in an admirable way put and placed in the marvelous splendors of the lamps which burn in them, and being already lit up and illuminated in God, besides what they are given and deliver to him, they send to God in God the same splendors that they received with loving glory, the ones inclined toward God, having also become blazing lamps in the splendors of the divine lamps, sending back [Return of the communications of God into himself in a manner as pure as they are received.] to their friend the same light and warmth of love that they receive. Because they in the same manner that they receive it, give it to him who gives it and with the same excellences that it is given to them; like the glass being pierced by the rays of the sun; even though here it is in a more exalted way because of the exercise of the will which intervenes there with strange excellences, namely alienated and removed from all common thought and from all which can be said about it. For [Transformation Number 25] in conformity with the excellence with which the understanding has received divine Wisdom, is the excellence and the perfection with which the soul gives it; and in accordance with the excellence with which the will is united with divine will, also is the excellence with which it gives to God into God the same goodness; for it receives it [This spot is wholly divine. This is related to the explanation that I gave about a passage in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of St. Mark (Mark 9:48-49 {KJV} – “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.”) where I show how the soul receives only in order to give.] in order to give it. And in the same manner in compliance with the perfection, which it knows in the greatness of God, being united into it, it shines and gives warmth of love. And according to the excellences of the other divine attributes that he communicates to the soul, namely force, beauty, justice are also the excellences with which the spiritual sense gives to its Beloved into its Beloved the same light that it receives from him: because being made one same thing with him, it is God through

participation; and even though this is not as perfectly as in the other life, it is nevertheless, in the way that we said, as if in the shadow of God. And [Will of God Number 28] in this manner being by means of this transformation the shadow of God, it makes in God, by God, what he makes in it by itself: in so far as the will of the two is one: and thus as God gives himself with a free and gracious will, in the same way it having also a will all the more free and generous because it is more united with God in God, it is almost giving to God the same God, through a loving satisfaction that it has from the Being and the divine perfections. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 3, Verses 5-6)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

5. Explaining these words of John of the Cross: there are between God and the soul divine, intimate and secret communications, which pass into the substance of the soul, and are little substantial touches from the divine union: (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 26) says; When God sanctifies the soul, besides the virtues and created gifts, that he places in the powers, and besides the habitual grace which is established in the essence of the soul, the same person of the Holy Spirit also communicates itself, in conformity with the common doctrine of the Theologians, which is of St. Thomas in the first part question 43 particularly in article 3, he concludes in this way: But still in this gift of sanctifying grace one has the Holy Spirit and it remains in man, from where it comes that the same Holy Spirit is given and sent. – he is not contented with saying that the Holy Spirit is sent, but he says the same Holy Spirit, in so far as true friendship does not only ask for the union by affection, but by intimate and real presence as much as possible. (*Notes and Remarks on John of the Cross* Disciple 1, Sentence 4, Section 1)

#### Section 2. Communications with the souls from spirit to spirit.

1. For one must receive oneself before communicating to the others; and nevertheless the reception of the divine mysteries must precede the distribution, which is made of them. For it is a beautiful order universally established in all divine things, which wants the sacred Pontiff to be the first who participates, and who is filled with the gifts that God through his intervention must communicate to the others: which in good time, he gives part to the others; but not beforehand.

That is why those who audaciously misuse the divine doctrines and sciences, before having acquired the custom of them, and before having formed their life, are considered profane and entirely alienated from our holy institute: all the more because it is the same things as with the rays of the sun, where after the most subtle and the most transparent matters are filled the first by the light which is infused into them, they themselves next, like the sun itself, diffuse the light which they abound in, on the other bodies which are below them. Therefore it is not necessary that this one (the sun) ventures to serve as leader and guide to the others in whatever divine mystery there may be, which in all the condition of its life is not very conformed with and very similar to God, and which through divine inspiration and election is not declared nor designated master and director of the others. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy* Chapter 3)

#### HENRY SUSO

2. Their love and their grace are so immense that it spurts out of them onto the others, even though they do not know and do not even seek to know it. They are very few in number, but God permits the Church to be established over them like over some many columns; and without them the Devil would wreak strange havoc on earth. – They do not know with certainty that they have arrived near their origin; but sometimes from their origin a small sparkle is shed over them, which makes them easily see that their light is extraordinary.

They have abandoned themselves to God so purely, so nakedly and so simply in faith, that the gentleness that they receive from God, causes them more sorrow than joy. They desire nothing other than following in simplicity the example of Jesus Christ. They do not want, love, await any consolation. – They are so humble that they believe themselves unworthy of the gifts and gentleness and consolation of God, and they do not as much as wish for them. – All, which happens either to them or to the others is always agreeable to them. If God gives to them, they are content; if he takes away, they are still so; and they attribute to themselves nothing of that which is given to them. – They do not look out for their interest either at the time or for eternity; they have lost themselves and live in enlightened ignorance without wanting to know anything. – They suffer trials from the hands of demons (devils), which are above all human thoughts. – All the creatures torment them; and they are always ready to suffer and to walk in this path until their last breath. They are unknown to the world; but they know the world perfectly. These are the true worshipers who adore the Father in spirit and in truth. (*One the Nine Rocks* Chapter 31)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

3. This holy soul engulfed in the pacific sea of God its love, would have desired [Note if it could have had some desire.], if it could have had some desire, to express to its spiritual children the feelings that it had about its gentle love, in whom it was submerged. It said to them: O if I could say what this heart feels, I feel myself burning interiorly! And they said to it: Ah our mother, tell us some way; I cannot (she responded) find the proper words for such a great love; and all that I would say about it, would be so unlike it, that harm would be done to this gentle Love. What I can tell you about it, is that if from what this feels a single drop fell into hell, it would be changed into Paradise; and there would be such a great love and unions that the devils would become Angels, and sorrows would be changed into consolation, because no sorrow can remain with the love of God.

A Monk finding himself present there, said to her: my Mothers I do not understand that, and willing (if it were possible) would I understand it better. It responded to him: My son, it is completely impossible for me to say any thing else to you about it. he responded: My mother, if we give it some interpretation, which corresponded to what you think about it, would you say so? She answered, O my son, most willingly. Then he said to her: [Union Number 34] I believe that the effect of the love that you feel, is a deep and unitive warmth which unites the soul to God its love, and which unites it so much to him by participation in his goodness that it does not discern itself [The soul in the essential union no longer distinguishes itself from God.] from God. This union is so admirable that there are no appropriate terms to express it; and one cannot feel, taste, or desire anything except the unitive love. – Now hell, the devils and the damned are completely the opposite, namely by their rebellion against God: if it was therefore possible for them to receive a single drop of such a union, it would deprive them of all the rebellion they have against God, and would unite them in such a way with his love that they would be in eternal life; because their rebellion is a hell to them, which is found in all the places where this rebellion is. If there were a single drop of union; there would no longer be hell, but eternal life, which is found everywhere the union is. The mother hearing that say: My dear son, it is exactly like you said. – Then the Monk says to her: Ah my Mother can you not ask God your Love for some of these drops for your children? She answered with great joy: I see this gentle Love as so courteous, that I can ask him nothing [Difficulty in asking for anything positive. Simple exposition.] for them: but only will I present them to him. (*Life* Chapter 36)

#### ST. TERESA

4. What empire does a soul, which Our Lord has guided up to here, have? It watches all things without being included and enveloped there. O that it is ashamed of the time that it spent stopped there! O that it is amazed by its blindness! But what compassion does it not have from those who are still plunged into it, particularly if they are people of prayer, for whom God does favors? I would like to cry out loud to make them understand that they are being seduced by treacherous lure and false delights, and sometimes even it knows; next a thousand persecutions come to melt on its head: one says that it is hardly humble, and that it wants to give lessons to those from whom it should learn, especially if this is a woman. It is here that it is condemned, and with reason; because one does not know the impulsiveness which moves it in such that it cannot contain itself and cannot prevent itself from pulling from error those for whom it wants good, and whom it desires to see freed from the prison of this life, which is not a slight thing, and does not seem to it less hard then that where it saw itself captive. (*Life* Chapter 20)

5. O my Lord, if you had placed me in a state where I could have announced this out loud! I know that I would not have been believed, as they do not attribute faith to several that know how to say it in a different way then me. (*Life* Chapter 21)

6. These flowers are different, and exhale a different scent than those that we smell here below. Now I understand that the Wife through these words asks to perform great works for the service of God and the good of her neighbor; and so she rejoices in losing this contentment and enjoyment; for these flowers belong more to the active life than to the contemplative life, and consequently she seems to lose in that; but her request is accorded to her: in so far as the soul being in this state, it never ceases operating, and Mary and Martha then always go hand in hand: for in the active (which seems to be the exterior) the interior operates; and when the active words come from this root, they are admirable and sweet-smelling flowers; because they proceed from the tree of love of God, and they are made for him alone without view to any self interest, and the perfume of these flowers is spread far to be profitable for several. (*Conception of the Love of God* Chapter 7)

7. For truly I believe that the souls which Our Lord leads here (to what I could understand) do not remember themselves either if they were or not, as for casting this on the profit or loss of it: they think only of serving and satisfying Our Lord: and knowing the love that God has for his servants and his children, they have contentment in being deprived of favors and divine caresses in order to serve their neighbor, to tell him beneficial truths, and make his soul advance by the best path which is possible for him; and as I said, they do not think whether they will lose by it. The advancement of a neighbor is present to their eyes and nothing else; so much so that as to satisfy God more, they

neglect themselves for the good of their brothers and willingly lose their life in the pursuit: in short being intoxicated by this heavenly wine, and their words enveloped in the sublime love of God, they do not care about self; and if they remember it, they do not care about satisfying men. These people profit greatly. (*Conception of the Love of God* Chapter 7)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

8. It does good to converse with these sorts of spirits, especially when they are extraordinarily touched, drawn and extended by luminous and divine influences, which at that time abound in them almost without them being aware of it, because of the great facility and simplification with which they flow out like waves, by their very simple, luminous and illuminating words, which go about simplifying those who have the happiness to share in the divine torrents of delights.

But those who are consumed in all the highest, deepest and simplest lights and manifestations have fallen into one, by various successions of illuminations; and in whom these illuminations have finally dispersed and lit up the fog, in the darkness of which the very clear, simple and consummate light has succeeded; those ones are forever amply and profoundly capable of seeing all, attaining all, judging all, and enlightening the others by the exuberance of their very simple and very effective light; which by its simple fertility effectively simplifies and dilates the depths which are touched by it. Moreover it is poured into them by infusion for the same result. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 9)

9. See Spiritual Fertility Number 3.

10. One must not in the least doubt that the souls wholly consummated in God himself, about which we have expressed here and elsewhere the most divine state, as much in their enjoyment as in their bankruptcy, are always equally and perfectly superior to all the feelings and apprehensions of their corpses, especially among their equals. It cannot be otherwise, and these souls always equally anticipate by their sovereign light all the departures and expressions that they make of in that itself. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 2, Chapter 6, Number 15)

11. See Loss Number 47.

12. Your Reverence knows enough how hearts mutually speak to each other, and that however distanced they are the more are they united and speak together. This is all the more true among us, because our affection is simple and unique in God in who we live. We converse mutually in this way in simplicity of spirit, above all which can be said about the present and various events; in so far as what we profess to each other is life in the same life of God, the love of whom ravishes us constantly to love him and to lose ourselves in him up to the last possible point. Although we are aware of disorder in this age, it is nevertheless something about which we do not think, leaving the events such as they may be to divine Providence. (Letter 8)



SECTION 9  
CONFESSION  
EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

SHORT METHOD

Examination must always precede Confession; but Examination must be in conformity with the state of the souls. Those, which are here, must be exposed before God who will not fail to, enlighten them and make them know the nature of their mistakes.

This examination must be made with peace and tranquility, expecting more from God than from our own search, the knowledge of our sins.

When we examine ourselves with effort, we easily mistake ourselves. We [Isaiah 5:20] believe the good to be bad and the bad to be good; and self love easily fools us. But when we remain exposed to the eyes of God, this divine Sun makes them seen down to the smallest atoms. One must therefore quit and abandon oneself very much to God as much for examination as for Confession.

As soon as one is in this way of Prayer, God does not fail to reprove the soul for all the mistakes that it makes. It has no sooner committed an error that it feels a burning which reproaches it. This is then an examination that God is making, which lets nothing escape; and the soul has only to turn itself toward God, suffering the punishment and the correction that he makes to it.

As this Examination on the part of God is continual, the soul can no longer examine itself; and if it is faithful in abandoning itself to God, it will certainly be better examined by his divine light, than it could do with all the care it took; and experience will certainly make that known to it.

As for Confession, it is necessary to be warned about one thing, which is, that the souls which walk in this path will often be amazed that when they approach the Confessional, and they begin to tell their sins, instead of regret and an act of contrition that they are accustomed to doing, a gentle and tranquil love takes hold of their heart.

Those who are not well instructed want to pull themselves away from that [This is explained above; see Acts] in order to perform an act of contrition, because they heard that it is necessary, and it is true. But they do not see that they are losing the true contrition, which this is infused love, infinitely greater than what they could do by themselves. They have an eminent act, which includes the others with more perfection: although they do not have them, as distinct and multiplied.

They may not trouble themselves to do something else when God acts more excellently in them and with them. It is to have sin [If, as it has been seen when the Acts (Number 5) were dealt with the actions which come from God and of which he is the principle agent, are divine actions; when they imprint in us hatred for sin, this hatred has the same qualities as him, with the right proportions.] as God hates it, to hate it in this way. It is love as pure as that which God operates in the soul. That it may not therefore be eager to act, but that it may remain as it is, following the advice of the Sage (Wise Man): [Ecclesiastes 11:22 (Apocrypha) – “**The blessing of the Lord is in the reward of the Godly, and suddenly he maketh his blessing to flourish.**”] Put your confidence in God, remain in repose in the place where he put you.

It will also be surprised that it will forget its flaws and it will have trouble remembering them: However it must not be troubled [One has seen in the article Falls how the faults of these souls are very slight; and it is on this foot that this must be taken.] about it for two reasons. First, because this forgetfulness is a sign of the purification of the fault and that it is best in this degree to forget all which concerns us in order to remember only God. The second reason is that God never fails, when one must be confessed, to show the souls its greatest faults: for then he himself makes his examination, and it will see that it will better come to the end in this way, then by all its own efforts.

This cannot be for the previous degrees, where the soul being still in action, can and must make use of its industry for all things, more or less, according to its advancement.

As for the souls of this degree that they may keep to what has been told to them, and that they [Note: This presumes God acting in the soul, in the way that has been marked in the article Acts.] may not change their simple occupation.

It is the same way for Communion: That they let God act and they remain in silence: God cannot be better received than by a God. (Chapter 15)

AUTHORITIES

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

1. The day after the Feast of St. Benedict having gone at the insistence of her sister who was a Nun, to confess to the Confessor of their community who was a very good Monk, as soon as she had knelt down before him she received such a great affliction of love of God in her heart with such a clear view of her miseries and of the goodness of God that she

almost fell to the ground from it, by the feeling of a very great love and knowledge of the offenses that she had committed against such a good God, she was purged of them in his affection, and pulled outside of all thought of the world; so that she cried out on the inside with a very ardent love: No longer of this world, no longer of sin: and if at the same instance if there had been a thousand worlds she would have abandoned them. – Being thus at the feet of her Confessor, – and not being able to either speak or open her mouth because of the interior sweetness and the extreme love that she was feeling, she said to him: I would willingly leave this confession for another time if that is agreeable to you.

After that she made her confession with so much contrition, that her soul was completely indignant. And although God at the moment that he gave her this gentle and loving affliction pardoned her all her sins, consuming them in the fire of his unbelievable love; yet wanting to satisfy his justice he made her pass through the path of satisfaction and contrition for the period of around fourteen months. After which this sight was removed from her, so that she never again saw the slightest spark of her sins as if they had all been flung into the bottom of the sea. (*In Her Life* Chapter 2)

2. I then saw the others lament their misfortunes and bad inclinations, and they were making several efforts to resist them: but the more they fought to cure their blemishes, the more of them did they commit; and when someone told me all his sorrows, I answered him: You have misfortunes, and lament them; I have them all, and do not bemoan them. You do evil and bewail it; I would do like you if the all powerful God was not holding me back. You cannot defend yourself against them and I cannot either. It is therefore necessary for us to forsake ourselves, and place the care of our affairs in him who alone can defend us from evil; and he will do this, which by ourselves we cannot do. In this way one can have repose along with the wicked side, which by its nature torments us forever on all sides: but when it is thus imprisoned, bound to and held back by God, it submits itself to the yoke and speaks no more. (*Life* Chapter 16)

3. She had in her soul no remorse to confess: and wanting to confess as was her custom, she found in herself no fault, which made her so confused from the shock that she did not know what to say. She forced herself to tell of her guilt in general, believing that she was hiding it: and although she was in this alienation, she found herself occupied in a very great peace, from which she could not be diverted. (*Life* Chapter 33)

4. I saw that this love had such an open and pure eye, and such subtle sight, that it saw from far away, that I remained astonished by it because of the great imperfections that it found, and that it showed me so clearly to be in me that I had to acknowledge them. It made me see many things, which to me and to many others had seemed just and perfect, and that it however found unjust and imperfect; and it even found blemishes in all things. So I spoke about spiritual things, which, because of the great fire which was burning me, I was often besieged by, and that I understood, because the eye of love showed them to me and made them known; immediately love reproved me saying that I should not speak. (Chapter 41)

5. I did not know what to do or say to such subtle sights of this love, which was besieging me so strongly. -- When this personal side saw itself surprised in its malice and properties it could no longer deny the imperfections that love had uncovered, it turned toward the love and said: Since you have such a subtle eye and such great power, I render myself unto you; and although my sensual side is very afflicted by it, do everything according to your good pleasure and will, which is to remove from me this wretched robe of self love, and clothe me in pure, clean, upright, great, ardent and inflamed love. (Chapter 41)

6. The first time that she wanted to confess to him, she said to him: My Father, I do not know where I am, either in soul, or in body: I would certainly like to confess, but I can see in myself no offense that I have done. It is true that as for the sins that she sometimes declared, she could not see them as sins that she had thought or said or done; but as a child who does wrong in one thing about which he is ignorant, when he is told, you did wrong, he blushes from what he is told, but not from knowing that he did wrong. –

I do not know what to do to confess; for I have nothing in me, which has so much vigor, that I can say: I did, or said something for which I feel remorse in my conscience. I do not want to be left to confess; but I do not know to whom to give the fault for my sins. I want to accuse myself and I cannot. It was left for her to perform the acts necessary to confession, by which she was confused, because she knew no part in her which could have offended God: yet she wanted to confess and accuse the rebel part of her which was disobedient to God, which was herself, and she did not find it. (*Life* Chapter 44)

7. O pure Love, with your fierceness you make the slightest stain of imperfection a hell, greater and more rigorous than that of the Damned! That is what no one will believe or be able to understand, save he who will be exerted and felt in you. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 6)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

8. Indeed I know a soul, which as soon as one mentioned some mystery or maxim which brought back to it more directly than ordinarily, the presence of God, as much in Confession as much in a particular conference, it returned so strongly into itself that it had trouble to come out, to speak and respond, in such a way that in its exterior it remained as if destitute of life, and all the senses dulled until the Husband permitted it to go outside, which was sometimes early enough, and other times later. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 7)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

9. There where true love is, is the true feeling of having offended God, that I would call compunction rather than contrition. It is, I say, impossible for such a soul, unrestrained after having committed a sin, to not be brought to such sorrow by the act that its excellent habit produces: and that is what is renewed in the truly loving soul at the time of its examination and the review of its sins: so that when it actually accuses itself, it is with the same sorrow and compunction: and in this feeling it uncovers for the Doctor the small wounds of its heart. – Several people in their simplicity and ignorance of their path in this noble habit, and in the practice of its acts, as much as necessity requires it, without them knowing that it is thus. This comes in consequence of their own practices. – This excellent ignorance makes its subject simple and unknown to itself as for the non-necessary discernment of its movements: For its actual and loving occupation in God do not allow it any reflection, still less for that than for another thing, whose reasons must be drawn from the excellence of the depths already more or less excellently opened and penetrated by divine Sapience. (*Mirror of Conscience* in the Preface)

10. Here we are not speaking about contrition to the truly lovingness of God, seeing that all his desire is only love. All that afflicts him is when one fails to give him love for love ardently, constantly, indefatigably and according to his total. It is that alone which afflicts him, but by a loving, gentle and cordial affliction, totally confident in its Beloved. (*Mirror of Conscience* in the Preface, Treatise 1, Number 15)

11. The true spiritual discerns the slightest dissoluteness and disorder of his passions and movement; and in that appears the total perfection of a soul truly enlightened to see its order and its disorder. The more it has light, the more and the better is it ordered, tranquil and peaceful within. (*Mirror of Conscience* in the Preface, Treatise 1, Number 20)

#### MONSR. OLIER

12. I am not shocked by your abatements and your sorrows. You attach yourself too much to the sight of your weaknesses, which discourage you and trouble your peace. –

Sin is a basilisk. It is so venomous that it kills with one look. Unless you always have your antidote with you, who is your divine Jesus, you could not look at it without being in danger of being mortally poisoned. This sight weakens you day by day, as you also feel it through your experience: for continually watching only your baseness, you have nothing, which elevates and corrects you. The sight of your miseries discourages you and beats you down; and nothing supports you. (Letter 126)

#### FATHER EPIPHANY LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

13. The Reverend Mother of Chantal consulting her holy Father on the simplicity of her Prayer, I ask you, she says, my very dear Father, if the soul especially in prayer should not reject all sorts of discourses industry, replies, curiosities and similar things, and instead of watching what it does or will do, watches God, remaining in this simple sight of him and his nothingness, wholly abandoned, content and tranquil, without moving itself in the least in order to perform sentient acts from understanding and will, not even for the practice of the virtues or the detestation of its faults; for Our Lord puts in the soul, it seems to me, the feelings that are necessary and he enlightens it perfectly, and a thousand times better than it could be with all its speeches and imagination. You will say to me why do you then go from there? O God! It is my misfortune, and in spite of me; experience having taught me that this is very harmful for me; but I am not mistress of my spirit, which without my leave wants to see and run everything. – The Holy Bishop answered her; my daughter, since Our Lord has for a long time lured you to this sort of prayer, having had you taste the so desirable fruits which come from it, remain firm there. – I order you to simply remain in God, without trying to do anything, and without inquire about anything however much it may excite you. (Third Mystic Conference & *On the Life of the Mother of Chantal* Part 2, Chapter 7)

14. Mr. du Bellai surprised that St. Francis of Sales was preparing so little to say the Mass, he said to him: I am very astonished, my Father, by the little preparation and act of graces, that you do before and after the Mass: even today, you come from a conversation with a Lady, which had lasted almost two hours, you made a deep bow at the Altar, you got dressed, and you said the Mass; after having said it, you took off your priestly garment, and having made a deep bow at

the Altar, you returned to the same conversation. St. Francis of Sales answered him: And me, I could say to you, my Brother, that I am surprised that you say so many prayers, and that you perform so many acts before and after the Holy Mass: but since you must be satisfied about the difficulty that you brought up, which concerns only my particular disposition, I will tell you that I do not know what else to do to be disposed to such a great mystery other than what I do; I endeavor to preserve myself continually in the presence of God and to always walk in his sight. This perpetual sight always makes my interior disposition; and as I see only God, it seems to me that my will wants only him: it is he who applies me to all that I do; by myself I apply myself to nothing; I am only an instrument in his hands, to go where he wants, and to do what pleases him: everywhere I carry the same disposition, to the Altar, to the table, to bed, and in all places. You speak about this Lady, -- I do not look at her in her I look at her only in God, or rather I only look at God in her, and in all the other creatures: God wants me to speak to her before and after the Mass; I want it without wanting it through the state of abandon and annihilation that I try to preserve for all that he wants from me: he wants me to say the Mass; I do it with the same disposition. This is, my Brother, all that I know how to do. (12<sup>th</sup> Mystic Conference)

15. The Reverend Mother of Chantal, by making St. Francis of Sales aware of her conscience, said to him: the soul would like to make use of this union for the exercise of the morning, that of the Holy Mass, preparation for Communion, and the act of grace for all the benefices, and finally for all things. (In her Life Part 3, Chapter 4)

The response of the Saint is seen in Book 4 of his Epistles, Letter 14. You are, he says to her, like the little St. John, while the others eat various meats at the table of the Savior, by several pious considerations, you rest in sweet slumber on his sacred breast. And for my last advice, never detour from this path; remember that the residence of God is made in peace; follow [Divine movements that one must follow. Passive and active simplicity.] the conduct of his divine movements; be simple in grace; be active and passive or patient, according to what God wants, and carries you to; but by yourself do not leave your place; remember what I said to you so many times, that I put in Theotime (On the Love of God Book 6, Chapter 11) which was made for you and for your peers: you are the wise statue; the Master has placed you in the nook, leave from there only when the Master draws you out. (In her Life Part 3, Chapter 4)

16. Harphius learned contemplative, says that the soul which is in this practice, need not be embarrassed by the sins of the past life or by the daily faults, for that it must not enter into faint heartedness or worry, that it must abstain from examination and from all eager pursuits in which much self love is often found. (In her Life Part 3, Chapter 4 and On the Mystic Theology of Harphius Book 3, Chapter 4)

SECTION 10  
CONSISTENCY  
STATE OF CONSISTENCY OR STABILITY

CANTICLE

The enjoyment of God is permanent and lasting; because it is inside of us; and because God being our final goal, the soul can constantly flow out into him. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

The property of the essential Union is to strengthen the soul in such a way, that it can no longer have these lapses which happen to beginning souls, in which the grace being still weak, they feel eclipses and still make falls. But through this Union it is confirmed (if this term can be used) in Charity, since then it remains in God; and [I John 4:16] he who remains in God, remains in charity; for God is charity. (Chapter 2, Verse 6)

There is no more winter for a soul which has arrived in God; but there is a composite of the three other seasons, which are found wholly reunited in one, and as if immortalized by the loss of winter. (Chapter 2, Verse 13)

The soul having left itself and having passed beyond all the creatures, encounters its Beloved, who shows himself to it with new charms: Which persuades it that the fortunate moment of the consummation of the marriage is near, and that the permanent union is going to be bound. (Chapter 3, Verse 4)

A thousand shields are ready there, to defend it against so many visible and invisible enemies: and it is armed with so much force in God that it fears no attack, [Note as long as it remains like this: which shows; that the stability I am speaking about, does not exclude in rigor the capacity of falling.] as long as it remains like this: for here its state is not yet permanent. (Chapter 4, Verse 4) O Wife worthy of the jealousy of the Angels, you have at last found your Beloved. – You have him to no longer lose him. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

The Beloved having found his Wife wholly his property, completely melted and prepared for the consummation of the marriage, and to be received in him through [Everywhere I speak about permanent state, I am not claiming to speak about an absolute incapacity to sin; but in relation to the past vicissitudes and the difficulty of the falls, which comes from the soul having contracted the habit of being turned to God, of being in God, of no longer being watched either by itself or the creatures, source of sin. God keeps it in him, clasps it through the loving attention without attention, or, to speak correctly, he keeps it hidden with Jesus Christ in him. (Colossians 3:3 {KJV} – “*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*”)]] permanent state. (Chapter 6, Verse 3)

The Wife is perfect in her depths through the loss of all pursuit of self.

One must notice that among the praises that the Husband had given to the Wife up to this point, he had not yet said (until she was entirely flowed out into his divine unity) that she was unique and perfect, because these qualities are found only in God, when one is entirely consummated in him through permanent and lasting state. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

Which is the one which advances, elevating itself little by little; for one must know that the soul although having arrived in God, elevates itself little by little and [One must pay attention to what is said in this verse, that the soul perfects itself: which shows that I do not mean that consistency is for the state of grace which excludes advancement and merit, although it is almost impossible for such a soul to be rejected, and to be friend and enemy. If God with so much goodness preserves those who sincerely do not want to offend him; why would he not preserve his Wife who is entirely his, who has separated herself from all the creatures and from herself for his love, who neglects herself in order to think only of him, who leaves herself in order to pass into him through a love as real as it is pure. That which would make our Wife fall, would be self regard and self satisfaction; that is why her Husband removes from her all reflection on self, and he does not allow her to look at herself at all on earth. Consistency is in relation to the past vicissitudes and the fleeting unions or powers.] perfects itself in this divine life, until it arrives at the eternal rest. It imperceptibly raises itself into God, like dawn, until it comes to his perfect day and the consummated noon, which is the glory of heaven. But this eternal day begins in this life. (Chapter 6, Verse 9)

O daughter of the Prince! O daughter of God! Cry out the girls, your steps are beautiful, inside and outside! The steps on the inside are very beautiful, since she can always advance in God, without stopping to rest. It is the ravishing beauty of this advancement that it is a true repose, without the repose preventing the advancement, nor the advancement the repose: on the contrary, the more one rests, the more one advances; and the more one makes progress the more tranquil is the repose. The steps on the outside are also full of beauty: for this soul is completely well-ordered as if led by the will of God, and by the order of his providence. Her steps cause her to be admired in her walk because all steps are made in the will of God, from which they do not depart. The joints of the thighs mark the admirable order of the actions, which are performed with an entire dependence of the inferior part on the superior, and of the superior with respect to God. This great worker has forged and melted this soul in the furnace of love. (Chapter 7, Verse 2)

O Love, you no longer reject such a soul! And it can be said that it is [This passage which explains nothing must be related to the other passages which speak about the same thing.] forever confirmed in love, since it has been consumed by the same love and changed in it. The Beloved no longer seeing anything in his Wife which is not for him and of him, no longer turns away his glance or his love, as he can never stop being looked at or loved by himself. (Chapter 7, Verse 10)

It invites its Husband to go everywhere; for then it is wholly put in action. And as God is always acting on the outside, and always resting on the inside; in the same way this soul, which is confirmed on the inside in a perfect repose, is also always acting on the outside. Which it had done a short time ago [This means that if when it should be passive, it has acted, that would be error, because it will have hindered the action of God: it has been active with its own activity, and God wanted it completely passive in order to make it die to its own action. At present by dint of being passive, it has become, in the hand of God, like soft wax or an instrument without resistance, with which God does what pleases him; it is therefore passively acting because it is not moved by itself, but it lets itself be moved in the Holy Spirit by a motion as pure as it is sweetly loving: all true passivity must come to this, and that is its consummation.] in a flawed way, it does now with perfection. It is no longer itself, nor the fruits, which are in it that it watches: but it sees everything in God. It sees in the fields of the Church a thousand goods to be done for the glory of its Husband; and it works for them with all its strength; according to the opportunities [Note that it does not look for the opportunities: by itself it is only brought to solitude and to its repose: but God furnishes it himself, without her being mixed up in it, by his providence all the he wants it to do.] that providence provides for it. (Verse 12)

The third is the slumber of repose in God, permanent and lasting; it is a repose of ecstasy, but gentle and continual ecstasy, which causes no more change in the senses, the soul having passed into its God by the happy exit from itself. It is a repose from which it will never be diverted. —

The first repose is a promised repose, for which pledges and tokens are given: the second repose, it a given repose: and the third is a confirmed repose, which will no longer be interrupted. It could [This verse explains all that I said, to justify the other passages.] however be it absolutely, since liberty subsists, and it would be in vain that the Husband says, until the soul definitely wants it, if it could never want it: but after a union of this nature; except for the most extreme ingratitude and infidelity, the soul will never want it.

Nevertheless the divine Husband, who by praising his Wife himself, and agreeing for her to be praised in this presence, wants at the same time to always instruct her more; to make her understand that there is only vain self satisfaction in self and scorn of the others, which can lead to such a deplorable ruin. In the following verse he is going to place before her eyes the baseness of her removal and the misery of her nature, so that she never leaves her humility [One must notice that the more one loves and knows God; (here knowledge appears to come from love, and not love from knowledge); the more one knows and hates oneself, flees oneself and finally leaves oneself the strongest proof that one hates oneself, is to leave oneself; and that is solid humility.] (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

If the greatest waters of afflictions, of contradictions, or miseries, poverties and travesties could not extinguish charity in such a soul, one must not believe that the rivers of abandon to providence can do it: since they are the ones who preserve the soul. If man had enough courage to abandon all that he owned, and all his self, in order to have this pure charity, which is acquired only by the loss of all the rest, one must not believe that after such a generous effort to acquire a good that he values more than all things, and which effectively is worth more than all the Universe, he will then come to scorn it, so that he takes up again what he had quit. That is not possible; God makes us know by this the certainty and the consistency of this state; and how difficult it is, for a soul, which has arrived there to ever leave it. (Chapter 8, Verse 7)

It seems, O my God, that you took pleasure in forestalling all the doubts and objections that one could form. One could say, that this soul, which no longer possesses itself, and which no longer operates by itself, no longer is deserving. You are, O God, the God of peace, who has a vineyard, whose principle care you confide in your Wife; and the Wife is this vineyard itself. She is situated in a place, which is called, people: for you have made your Wife fertile and mother of an innumerable people. You have committed your Angels to guard her; and she reaps a great profit, and for you, O God, and for the soul itself. You give her the liberty to make us of and taste of the fruits: she has the advantage [It is noticeable enough by what is advanced, that I do not mean that in the stable state, one can no longer sin in severity, nor that one can no longer be deserving. The consistency is therefore in relation to the past vicissitudes and a stability of the foundation, which no longer varies. This is the proper state of the soul, which is not felt; this is a repose above feeling, different from the tasted peace: properly it is a non-trouble; although often God makes it spurt out into the senses with great delights. John of the Cross calls it, thrice fold peace.] of almost being in the state of no longer losing or displeasing you, and however, still that of not lacking in profiting and being always deserving. (Verse 11)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. This [The life interior, its beginning, its progress, and its confirmation are enclosed in these words.] benefit can only come about through the deification of the things, which are saved; and its deification is the union and the resemblance with God, as much as each person is capable of it. [Pure Love, Number 1]

Now the goal that all hierarchy offers is nothing but a continual love toward God and the divine things, which performs good and holy actions purely and simply for God. Whose charity must be preceded by a flight and an absolute removal from all which opposes him, without ever returning there, as also from a knowledge of things according to the

truth of their being, from the science and from the view of the holy truth, from a sharing [Infusion: uniformity; consummation of the life interior.] divinely infused with the uniform perfection [Satiation, Number 1] of the one itself, as much as it can be, from a banquet and a holy restoration of this sight which spiritually vanishes and which deifies whoever tends and aspires to it. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy*, Chapter 1)

2. We say then that this divine Beatitude; which is deity by nature, principle of Deification, from which the deified being is and proceeds to those who are deified, by its goodness has made a gift the hierarchy for the benefit and for the deification of all the gifted essences of understanding and reason. (*On the Ecclesiastes Hierarchy*, Chapter 1)

3. See Annihilation Number 1.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

4. For if it is true that God alone is immutable, it is without doubt that the Angels themselves are not by their nature so; and from there it follows, that if the Angels have something stable and fixed, it is only in God and by this fortunate disposition [It is to be noted that if pure love and submission of the will makes the Angels stable in God, these are the same dispositions which communicate a kind of stability to the soul in this life.] which makes them love him more than themselves and which keeping them perfectly submissive to this Sovereign Majesty assure them of the enjoyment of it. The evil Angel on the contrary, inflated by pride, that is to say, loving himself more than God and not wanting to be submissive to him, separated himself from this Sovereign Essence, and by that fell into a lapse, which makes him less than he was, for having quit the more for the less, that is to say, [Cause of fall, relying on self, instead of living by abandon and dependence on the grace of God.] for having loved his own power more than that of God. (*On the True Religion*, Chapter 13)

5. The childhood of this new man is spent in being nourished by the milk of the good examples that history puts before our eyes.

From there he enters the second age, where no longer needing the support of human authority, and forgetting all which can be borrowed from men, he advances himself toward the things of God, and where his reason enlightened by the lights of the sovereign and immutable love makes him walk with a firm step to what prescribes to him this primitive rule of all good.

From this second age succeeds the third, where the superior sphere having become firmer and more of a mistress begins to keep the other one subdued by the force of reason, as the wife is submissive to her husband; and it is that which makes this new man feel the sweetness of the conjugal union, under the guise of this spiritual modesty, which makes us no longer need to be forced to live well, and that when we are given complete liberty to sin, we do not want to make use of it.

From this third age one passes onto the fourth, where the forces always increasing, one in a certainly more solid and better, a followed matter comes to practice what one had begun to do in the third, and where one acquires this maturity of the perfect man which makes him capable of supporting without being shaken by all the storms of this world and all the attacks of persecution.

[Resurrection, Number 3] Next one passes to the fifth age, where the man elevated above all which could cause him the least trouble, in a profound peace enjoys all the abundance of the treasures which are found in the tranquil and inalterable kingdom of the sovereign and ineffable Wisdom.

This fifth age is followed by the sixth, which brings the renewal of the interior man to his last perfection, and which succeeds in retracing in him the image of the likeness of his God; in such a way that one is in the world as if not having been there, and one lives in advance the life which the Blessed in Heaven lives.

The seventh age which succeeds that one, is nothing other than eternal repose and perfect felicity always equal to itself, where there is no longer any distinction of images or states. For as death is the end of the old man, eternal life is that of the new one; because the one is laden with the condemnation incurred by sin, and the other is re-clothed in the justice for which glory is the reward. (*On the True Religion*, Chapter 26)

#### HENRY SUSO

6. This man is so much united to God that God himself becomes his foundation (depths). –

His resignation is wholly his action; he does nothing other than staying without doing anything. He lives familiarly with men without receiving the impressions of images; he loves them without attachment of affection, and he sympathies with their sorrows without anxiety and in full liberty. He is [Divine Motion Number 3] enlightened in the superior sphere by a light, which assures him that God is his essence and his life, who operates in him, and for whom he is only an instrument. – He is established in the truth. If he has simple opinions, it is when he is left to himself; but when he has departed from them, he enters into God, who is all science and truth. (*Dialogue on the Truth* Chapter 10)

## ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

7. The state of this soul is a feeling of such great peace that it seems to it that it is plunged with its heart and all its bowels interiorly and exteriorly, into a sea of very deep and very happy calm, from which it never comes out for something which can happen to it in this life: it remains immobile without being able to be troubled, and so impassive, that it seems to it that it feels on the inside as well as the outside only a very sweet peace. –

This Love – seems to say to the soul; be aware that nothing which remains in the world belongs to you any longer, and that the more you advance, the more you know that the [End for which we are created.] end for which man is created is certainly to love and to take pleasure and delight in this holy and pure love. When man by the grace of God has reached this so desired port of pure love, he can do nothing but love and rejoice; even when he is forced to do the opposite: and this grace that God gives to man is so admirable, and surpasses [Desires surpassed by fullness or divine satiation.] all desire and human thought so much, that he feels starting with this life that he is made a participant in the glory of the Blessed. (*Life* Chapter 18)

8. One can just as soon say that there is no God, as to say, that the pure and clean love of God in some creature can be deceived. [There is no deceit in this state as one will see when I write about this article.] (Chapter 19)

9. By the grace of God I have contentment without nourishment and love without fear, that is to say, which is never lacking. Faiths seem to me totally lost, and hope dead; because it seems to me that I hold and possess what formerly I believed and was hoping for. (Chapter 22)

10. See Purification Number 17.

11. See Will of God Number 16.

12. See Mortification Number 3.

13. When the soul through the correspondence that it has with God, can see its power and its dignity, it seems to it that it is sufficient not only to subjugate its body with all its bad habits and inclinations, but further to subjugate all the bodies which are in the world. Therefore the Martyrs feeling the dignity of their souls placed no value in the torments of the body. But when God does not give this light to the soul, because of some blemish, which is in it, then it remains so object, so vile and so weak, that the slightest thing flings it to the ground. –

This is a state where the spirit always remains in God with an infusion of pure, clean and simple love, through which it loves God, even without reasoning of thinking why it loves him: which is the way he must be loved, that is to say, without fear of any punishment, without hope of any reward, and without considering how lovable God is, for this State is above reasoning. –

Now the soul being in God who took possession of it, and who operates in it without the being of man, and without him having any knowledge of it, because he remains annihilated by divine operation, this soul remains in God forever; and it can say like the Apostle: [Romans 8:35] who will separate me from the love of God? (*Life* Chapter 32)

14. See Creation Number 5.

15. There remains a continual impression in the heart that with this love it lives always in God. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 7)

16. A loving heart of God cannot be defeated, because God is for it a formidable fortress to its enemies: it can be given neither fear by consideration of Hell, nor joy by consideration of Paradise; because it is so well-ordered that it takes from the hand of God all that happens to it, remaining with him in peace for all things, and as if immobile with its neighbor, being well-ordered by God and fortified in itself. (Book, Chapter 8)

17. I feel such a strong will with so a lively and great liberty, that I do not fear that anything can keep me from my Object in which I am contented. (Book 3, Chapter 14)

## ST. TERESA

18. On this subject I remember the words that the Angel said to the most sacred Virgin Our Lady, [Luke 1:35] the virtue of the Most High will overshadow you. Ah, a soul must be well protected when Our Lord puts it in this greatness! It can be seated and secure with reason. –

For such souls are seated and are fixed in truth: they do not look anywhere else for their consolation and their quietude, but only where they know they can have it truly; they place themselves under the protection of Our Lord, and desire nothing else. –



It seems that the soul enjoying the contentment that we talked about, feels itself totally absorbed, and seized by a certain shadow, and as if by a cloud of Divinity; from which such sovereign influences, and such a delicious dew-drop that they chose, comes to it, and with reason, the trouble (boredom) that the things of the world have given it. (*Conception of the Love of God* Chapter 5)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

19. The holy man first establishes a state of consistency on the top of the mountain, which makes up his Enigma. He says that the soul there is in a perpetual banquet, that divine silence and divine Wisdom are the character of this soul, that the only honor and the only glory of God lives on this mountain, that it has the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. For the soul, says Father Louis of St. Teresa who explains this Enigma, wants and is satisfied only with the sole glory and honor of God, and this is enjoys the first fruits of the glory of paradise, (as this heavenly Master [The Blessed John of the Cross] says) and by these means it is entirely transformed into God, and make like him; since in its operations it claims only his honor and his glory. (See the Enigma and its Explanation)

20. See Purification Number 37.

21. See Naked (Blind) Faith Number 19.

22. The soul will certainly see how much loftiness and baseness there is in this path, and how after the prosperity that it is enjoying, thunderstorms and toil crop up, so that it seems to it that it was given this calm in order to prepare and encourage it for the present pain, as also after storms and misery abundance and a lull follow. That is the ordinary style and the practice of the state of contemplation, of climbing and descending, and never remaining in the same state until one has arrived at tranquility. The cause of this is that as the state of perfection, which consists of the perfect love of God and scorn for one self, cannot exist without these two parts, knowledge of God and of one self, the soul must inevitably be trained in both, having it sometimes taste of one, making it grow, and sometimes having it feel the other, humiliating it, until having acquired the perfect habits, the ascending and the descending cease, having already reached and being united to God. (*Dark Night of the Soul* Book 2, Chapter 18)

23. The repose and quietude of this spiritual house come to be won by the soul habitually and perfectly, (as long as the condition of this life allows it) by the means of these substantial acts of divine union, that we just said that it has received from Divinity secretly hidden from the trouble of the Devil, the senses and the passions: where the soul has been purified, resting and made strong, consistent and stable in order to with durability receive the said union which is the divine marriage between the soul and the Son of God. (*Dark Night of the Soul* Book 2, Chapter 24)

24. The Devil dreads greatly a soul, which has arrived at perfection. Now this bed of the soul is interlaced or interwoven with virtues, because in this state the virtues are so bound to each other, so fortified together and united in a consummated perfection of the soul, that not only is there no place through which the Devil can enter, but it also remains so fortified and secured that not a single worldly thing either high or low can worry, molest, or move it: in so far as being already from all the troubles of the natural passions, removed and aside from the torment and the variety of temporal things, it in assurance enjoys the sharing of God. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 16)

25. See Will of God Number 24.

26. See Acts (Deeds) Number 4.

27. This is the consummation of this state [of spiritual marriage]: and the soul never rests until it arrives there; accordingly in this state there is certainly a greater abundance and repletion of God and a more secure and stable peace, and a more perfect sweetness without comparison to the spiritual engagement, being already in the womb of such a Husband: for by such a soul what St. Paul says is understood: [Galatians 2:20] I live no longer in me but Jesus Christ lives in me. Through so much is the soul leading such a happy life, which is a life of God, that one imagines if one can, what will the life be like, in which not only does it no longer feel any disgust, as God does not feel any, but it enjoys a delight and glory of God in the substance of the soul already transformed into him. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 28)

28. For in this transformation of love it happens to it in the same way as to the Angels, which weigh and value perfectly the things which come from sorrow, without feeling any, and exercise the works of mercy and compassion without feeling compassion; even though sometimes and in certain things God exempts it, giving it to feel and letting it suffer, so that it may be more deserving; - nevertheless the state does not bring that from self. –

So nothing more can befall it, or bother it, it having already gone outside of them all and having entered into the desired garden, where it enjoys all the peace and tastes of all sweetness, and is recreated in all delight according to whether the condition and state of this life allow it. (Couplet 21)

29. As the dove which departed from the Ark, returned with the branch of an Olive tree as a sign of the mercifulness of God, who had withdrawn the waters; in the same way does this soul leaving gone outside of the Ark of the omnipotence of God, when he created it, having crossed the waters of the flood of sins, imperfections, pains and toils of this life, return to the Ark of the womb of its Creator, with the olive branch, which is the clemency and the mercy that God used with it, having attracted it to such a high state of perfection, and after having stopped the waters of sin in the earth of the soul, and having made it victorious against the assaults and batteries of its enemies who tried to keep it from this good. (Couplet 34)

30. These souls possess the same goods through sharing that God does by nature; that is why they are truly God through sharing, like the companions of God. From this comes what St. Peter said: [2 Peter 1:2, 4] Grace and peace may be accomplished in you through the knowledge of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ so that you may be made companions of the divine nature. (Couplet 39)

31. See Union Number 59.

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

32. This passage of the Cantic: [Chapter 4, Verse 7] You are totally beautiful my Beloved and there is no blemish in you, Gislerius explains it in this way. The Wife is totally beautiful namely, in the spirit, in the soul and in the flesh; in the flesh, as purged by the action of the other emotions and excessive in the manners of the virtues; in the soul as detached from all evil last and decorated by the discourses of the precepts; in spirit as free and liberated even of tiny thoughts. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 14, Section 4)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

33. St. Thomas distinguishes the virtues according to the diversity of the movement and of the term. The virtues of those who profit and advance are purgative. The virtues of those who stop are as if at the term and degree of perfect love, those ones are of the term and of an already purified soul. About which degree St. Thomas forming the doubt, how in this life can there be a state of state, virtue of a term, degree that one says to be of perfect love in everything, that one distinguishes from the soul which profits, seeing that whatever perfect love one has in this world this love can grow and profit; how is it possible, says this Saint (2.2. Question 24 Article 9) that love being able to increase as advanced as it may be in this life, that there is a degree of love that is called perfect, distinct from that which grows, since growing, profiting and increasing is only one thing.

The Saint answers that the perfect also grow in love, but that their principle care is never turned from that side; that their principle occupation is to remain united to God.

[Purification Number 64] Those are the virtues of the term, or of those who have already acquired divine likeness that are called the virtues of the already purified soul. The virtues go about little by little inclining the soul to this likeness. For the political virtues temper the passions, that is to say, constrict them to the middle, although with much work; the purgative ones remove them; those that are of the already purified soul forget them. So that, says St. Thomas, [That is immobility in virtue.] prudence no longer looks at anything but divine things, that temperance no longer knows earthly cupidity (greed), that strength ignores the passions, that justice is united in a perpetual alliance of friendship, to the Spirit of God by imitating it; and he adds, we say that these virtues are those of the Blessed or of the most perfect who are in this life. (*Notes and remarks on John of the Cross* Disciple 2, Section 1)

34. I cannot on this occasion omit the proof of these divine words exaggerated by St. Dennis Areopozite (Areopagite), in the Letter (10) that he wrote to the Apostle – St. John, Evangelistic Theologian consigned to the island of Patmos; I am not of so little spirit as to believe that you would endure something, but I think that you feel only the evils of the body in discerning them. He wrote him, that there are men so spiritual that they deserve to be called free from all evils, having been seized by the love of God, which starting in this life traces the beginning of the other, imitating among men the life of the Angels in total tranquility of spirit, and the appellation of the name of God: in such a way that it seems that pain does not reach there, but it is to feel and judge if that is a scourge or not; in the same way that he who saw the blow unleashed, although he did not feel the pain, could judge it.

O Notable abstraction! Notable perfection! Notable ignorance of passions! He said beforehand that he has met men so spiritual that they deserve to be called free from all evil, because they even rejoice in the pain, moved and incited by divine love, so made that they deserve to be called Gods.

This is the marvelous and mysterious conjunction that St. John saw in this woman so marked and noticed, that she wore the name of the sign itself (the great sign) covered with stars that were noticed only at night and in the absence of the Sun, and from the sun uncovered and apparent, that one does not see when the stars shine again: thus seems to have

joined night and day, darkness and light, Heaven and earth, homeland and exile; in short, their peak, that is to say, the beginning of those who comprehend, signified by the sun in a state of travelers and which travels through designated faith by the moon and the stars which light up the night: For this militant Church has so many perfect children and such purified spirits, as St. Thomas said, that in the application and perfection of the virtues the Angelic Doctor included the Blessed from there and the most perfect from here when he says: We say that these virtues are those of the Blessed or of the most perfect who are in this life.

This perfection goes so far ahead that St. Ambrose could say (Sermon 22 on Psalms 118 [or Psalm 119 in the King James Version] forgetting sins has already taken root in them, and the force of a perfect improvement is so great, that they pay no heed to the paths of error, that they would not know how to commit a crime if they wanted to. (Notes and Remarks on John of the Cross Disciple 2, Section 2)

35. St. Bernard certainly passes further beyond in the solitary Life of the Brothers of [Mont-Dieu], where he speaks about the most perfect resemblance, which can be conceived of between God and the soul. (See Spiritual Marriage Number 11-12)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

36. This is what makes them inalterable in their state of being fixed and firmness, and very stable in the sight and the contemplation of God, who did that in them, and will always continue it more and more until their supreme accomplishment, in accordance with the order of his eternal conscience. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order Chapter 9, Section 12)

37. Concerning what I say, that the most perfect people who can be conceived of in this life, are unattainable, impenetrable, immobile, and inalterable in their depths, and that even there they certainly live far beyond their own depths; I add that although that is very true, nevertheless they can be exceeded, not them; but in what appears to be them. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order Section 22)

38. It is not without cause that those ones are said to be Spirit; for they are so clothed and filled by the qualities of the Spirit, that their powers and their depths make up one single thing, where nothing enters on the outside to reach them and hinder them. One would, in a manner of speaking, just as soon reach God as them, in so far as their [Loss Number 38] soul is less in that it animates, than in God, that is to say, through appetite not only in so far as God is in their depths where they are fully transformed in eager force of a loving plunge into his infinite sea; but still beyond all that, they are lost there on the inside without resource, in the essence of God without reflection on themselves or on the created. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order Chapter 14)

39. Now he who [Hebrews 4:10] has entered into the repose of God, repose from his works, as God rested from his after the creation of all things. This eternal Spirit in the repose [This is related to what is written in the Explanations of Genesis 3:6, Exodus 20:10 and Hebrews 4:10] of his simple enjoyment is totally incomprehensible and unattainable for any inferior spirit. It is in this supreme point of consummation that all mysticism is reduced, making a very simple spirit very lost beyond the depths, in the sur-essence which swallows and absorbs it within his All. In this supreme unity [Admirable spot] nothing is seen, apprehended, or heard as distinct, or separated, or distinguishable or separable. Nothing is there but the eternal now, and there God alone is and lives in self in the creature, which has become himself through a loving reflux; which although refuge in his eternal principle remains nevertheless, and will remain. (Explanation of the Canticle Chapter 1, Verse 1, and Chapter 7, Verses 11 & 40)

40. By the same means all that this fire has consumed and transformed into self and through self, is itself without any difference or distinction, as far as that can be true in a creature. In effect it is not possible for the soul thus consummated, to divert itself from that very simple fruition by intention and will, all the more because its forces are entirely consumed in order to never have opposing appetites. I talk about will and intention; because the life that one lives here, it eternal, simple and sur-essential, in repose and fruition of the divine essence. For the soul in it consummation is totally refuge and lost in this divine essence with [Reason for which it cannot pray to the Saints, is that they are wholly consummated in unity.] all the Blessed. (Mystic Cabinet Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 6)

41. The soul being reduced and melted, as it is, totally according to its powers and its essence, is there fixed and established infinitely above all the past in God. (Mystic Cabinet Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 8)

42. One must still know, that God alone and no one else can act and suffer, either in an ordinary or extraordinary way, in souls living and dead in him by himself without any spirit touching their powers. (Mystic Cabinet Part 1, Chapter 1, Number 3)

43. But what? Does it not seem to you, o my Love, that in my abundance I fear seeing myself frustrated from the enjoyment of you, in the way that I have been in the past? No, my Husband; whatever I say, I do not fear that; for you are mine, and I am yours. You possess me, and I possess you perfectly. We are one in one and in the uniqueness of both of us. (Soliloquy 6)

44. In order to remain always unique in the unique, simple in the simple, without any attention or variety. (Contemplation Number 2)

45. But what we have to do in this occupation, which is so important and that for which we live, because it is your own good and repose in each of us; is to remain always equal to ourselves, inalterable and immutable in all occurrences, as if firm rocks in your infinite sea, that the waves only beat on the outside without in the least touching the foundation. (Contemplation Number 10)

46. God is always himself, and cannot change; and we, while we have not passed into him, remain mutable and changing everywhere. We must according to our power try to remain stable, and without change in him. That is the foundation, the essence and the eminence of the more pure, deeper and more lost spirits. That always keeps the senses ravished and attached on the inside, in most pure nakedness; and when all is reduced to the supreme unity of the spirit, as the spirit is simple and unique in the unity of God, there is no more distinction between the high and the love. In this eminent state one must act so as to not ever leave this divine unity, for whatever reason there may be. (Letter 19)

47. See Simplicity Number 32.

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

48. Taulere says that Albert the Great assures that the center of the soul is very wonderful, most pure and most certain; that it is the thing which can be the least uprooted, and which of all things can be the least hindered; that it is the most inherent thing and that which preserves best; that no contrariness nor adversity is found in its depths; no image, nor sensuality, no mutability; it is without any difference or distinctions, which proceed from fantasy, as St. Dennis says; it is the supreme among all things and there is nothing above it. It is called most pure [Because nothing enters into it and everything stays at the door. Happy is he who remains enclosed in its depths! He does not fear his enemies. Unhappy is he who leaves from there; for he is almost assured of his ruin.] because it has nothing in common with matter or material things: it cannot be hindered either, the soul having required a great light through its study, through its efforts, and through its diligence, which is turned for it into nature and habit; so that it no longer feels any pain or trouble. It is fixed and invariable; because it feels no contrariness, and the pleasure which is felt in these depths is not mixed with any sorrow or tasted in the sensory sphere. — These are the words of Albert the Great as reported by Taulere. (Sermon 2 Sunday 3 after the Trinity) (Book 2, Treatise 3, Chapter 10, Section 8)

## SECTION 11 CONVERSION

Although this is contained in the article of Acts, I will not fail to write, it again, in order to omit nothing.

### SHORT METHOD

Conversion is nothing other than turning oneself away from the creature in order to return to God. Conversion is not perfect (although it is good and necessary for salvation) when it is made only from sin to grace. To be whole, it must be made from the outside to the inside. The soul having turned to the side of God, it has a very great facility to remain converted to God. The more it remains converted, the more it approaches God and attaches itself; and the more it approaches God, the more it inevitably distances itself from the creature which is opposed to God. So well that it fortifies itself so strongly in the conversion that it becomes habitual; as if always natural to the soul.

Now one must know that this does not come about by a violent exertion of the creature. The only exertion that it can and must make with grace is to make an effort to turn and gather itself on the inside. After which there is nothing more to do but remain turned to the side of God in a [Note, that it is not side to remain useless; but to adhere continually to God without any slackening.] continual adherence.

God has an attracting virtue which forever presses the soul more strongly to come to him; and by attracting it, he purifies it: as one sees the sun attract a foggy haze to itself, and little by little, without any other effort on the part of this haze then letting itself be pulled, the sun by drawing it to self, refines and purifies it. (Chapter 11, Number 1-2)

### CANTICLE

The return [Note that whatever state it may be, when one has turned away, one needs conversion.] of the Wife is as prompt and sincere as the fault had been slight and unforeseen. (Chapter 6, Verse 12)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. See Consistency Number 1.

2. As it is not possible to be a participant in two extremely contrary things at the same times: also [Cause of deprivations and purifications; it is in order to hold on to nothing but God alone.] can it not be that he who has some share in the unity, may be divided and dismembered in two lives, as long as he constantly preserves and maintains this share that he has in the unity; that is why he must not in the least be retained by or subject to one of his affections by which the unity can be disconnected and divided. (Nakedness Number 1) Which the doctrine of symbols wanting in a holy way to give to understand under the guise of its enigmas, by stripping and laying bare he who approaches baptism, it (the doctrine) does neither more nor less than if it were stripping him of his first life, and as if it were detaching and unbinding him from all the affections, even the last and the smallest which could hold him back, by making him stand wholly naked and bare, face turned toward the setting Sun: and by this thrust aside, it seems that it makes him discord and reject behind himself all the communication that he had with the vice which brings about darkness in the soul; and still as if blowing and chasing away with the wind of his breath all the bad habits of the vicious affections that he had acquired: and moreover seems that it makes him profess to absolutely renounce all that which is contrary, and which can prevent him from becoming like God. Thus done, wholly freed and extricated as he is from all vicious affection, he is made to turn toward the east, in order to give him understanding that through the total flight from the vice he will obtain a firm and secure state, and a pure and clean sight in the divine light: and after he is made perfectly conformable to the unity by the love of truth, then one receives the holy promises and the protestations that he makes breath with all his forces and by a totally whole inclination to this same unity. (*Ecclesiastes Hierarchy* Chapter 2)

#### ST. TERESA

3. This happened, my Lord, since you retained me by your goodness so that I no longer commit so many offenses against you, and when I went about withdrawing myself from all which seemed to me, able to give you trouble; for, doing that you began to open and communicate your treasures to your servant: so it seems that you were awaiting nothing except that I had the will and the disposition to receive them; to such a degree did you begin to give me them promptly and begin to want although it was known that you were performing these favors for me. (*In Her Life* Chapter 19)

## SECTION 12 CREATION. FINAL END. GOAL. ORIGIN

### Creation. Final End (Goal). Origin SHORT METHOD

They taught them the end for which they have been created, and they do not teach them enough to enjoy this end. (Chapter 3, Number 1)

This gentle dependence on the Spirit of God is absolutely necessary; and makes the soul in a small [This little must be understood in comparison with those who do not take this path, who do not arrive there in this life.] amount of time reach the simplicity and unity in which it was created. It was created one and simple, like God. We must therefore in order to reach the end of our creation, leave the multiplicity of our actions, to enter into the simplicity and unity of God. (Chapter 21, Number 4)

God by creating us, [Genesis 1:27 and 2:7] created us in his image and likeness. He inspired in us the spirit of the Word through this breath of life that he gave to us when we were created in the image of God, by the participation of this life of the Word, which is the image of its Father. Now this life is [Unity, purity, simplicity, fertility: all these operations are of the Word.] one, pure, simple, intimate and always fertile. (Number 5)

The soul arrives at the divine union only by the repose of its will: and it cannot be united to God, [This must be understood about the essential union, and not about that of the power.] without being in a central repose and the purity of his creation. (Chapter 21, Number 3)

What is wished for from these souls, is that they advance toward their end, that they take the shortest and easiest path; that they do not stop in the first steps; and that following the advice of St. Paul, [Romans 8:14] they let themselves be moved to the Spirit of grace which will guide them to the end for which they were created, which is to enjoy God. (Chapter 21, Number 9)

It is a strange thing, that not ignoring, that one was created only for that, and that each soul which will not in this life reach the divine union and the purity of its creation, must burn in purgatory for a long time to acquire this purity; and that one cannot nevertheless endure God leading one there in this life. As if that which must make the perfection of the glory, would bring about evil and imperfection in this mortal life. (Number 10)

No one ignores that the sovereign Good is God; that the essential beatitude consists in the union with God; that the Saints are greater or less great, depending on whether this union is less or more perfect; and that this union cannot be made in the soul through any self activity, since God communicates himself to the soul only as far as its passive capacity is great, noble and vast. (Number 11)

### CANTICLE

As God here possesses each soul without interruption, this is what the difference of the union with God himself, with the other unions; in that in the unions with created beings, the object can be possessed only for moments; because the creatures are outside of us: but the enjoyment of God is permanent and lasting; because it is within ourselves; and God being our final goal, the soul can continually flow out into him as if in its term and center, and be mixed and transformed there, without ever again coming out from there [That is to say unless it falls and is rejected by God.]; in the way that a river, which is a body of water which comes out from the sea, and very distinct from the sea, finding itself outside its origin, tries through various means to near the sea; until having finally fallen back into it, it is lost and is blended with the sea, in the way that it was lost and mixed in the sea before going out from it; and it can no longer be distinguished from the sea.

One must still note that God gave us, in creating us, a share of his being, suitable for being reunited with him; and at the same time tendency toward this reunion. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

Our bed; she adds, these depths where you live in me, that I call ours so as to invite you to come give me this nuptial kiss that I first asked you for, and which is my goal; our bed, I say, is prepared and decorated by the flowers of a thousand virtues. (Chapter 1, Verse 15)

Her soul was melted and liquefied as soon as her Beloved spoke; and through this liquefaction she lost her hard and narrow qualities, which were preventing the consummation of the spiritual marriage: so that through this she was wholly disposed to flow out into her origin. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

You are so strongly of your Beloved, O Wife, that nothing prevents you from losing yourself in him; since the time that you were totally melted by the heat of his life, you have been disposed to flowing out into him, as if into your end (goal). (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

As soon as the soul begins to flow into its God like a river into its origin, it must be totally lost and engulfed in him. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

This soul is unique, because it is reduced in God to a perfect unity of its origin. It is very perfect, but from the perfection of God himself, and because it is free from all property, and disengaged from its hard, narrow and limited nature, as soon as by its entire flowing out it has entered into the innocence of God. (Verse 8)

I resuscitated (revived) you under an apple tree I pulled you from the slumber of mystic death, drawing you back from yourself, from your own corruption, and from the corrupted and spoiled being that your mother has communicated to you by her sin: for all the operations of God in the soul tend toward only two things: one, to deliver it from its actual spitefulness, and from the malignancy of its corrupted nature: the other, to render it unto its God as pure and clean as it had been before Eve let herself be seduced.

Eve in her innocence belonged to God without any property: but she let herself be raped, drawing herself back from her God to prostitute herself to the Devil: so that we have all shared in the misfortune of this prostitution. We come to the world like bastard children, which have no trace of their true father; and they can be recognized as belonging to God only if they are legitimized by baptism. But although they may be so, they keep some part of this unfortunate fornication. There remains in them an evil quality opposed to God, until God through long, frequent and strong operations, has removed this evil quality [Property: evil part of self.] pulling the soul from itself removing all its infection from it, giving it again the grace of innocence, and losing it in him: that is what he calls reviving its innocence from the same place where its mother who is human nature, was corrupted. (Chapter 8, Verse 5)

## AUTHORITIES

### HENRY SUSO

1. This Rock so beautiful and so vast nevertheless has very few inhabitants. But the intention of God was not that it has so few. Know that the door, which leads to, the origin through which all creatures in heaven and on earth departed is there. But how does it come about that these men so weak on the outside, on the inside appear brilliant like Angels?

It is that they are weakened by climbing so high and there remains in them not the least but of blood or marrow, which has not been dried up. – They subsist in life only by a pure and chaste blood, which has been put in place by him for the love of which all their natural and impure blood was consumed. (*The Nine Rocks* Chapter 31)

2. See Communications Section 2, Number 2.

### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

3. This Wife of Jesus Christ, in order to show how the annihilation of man in God comes about, said: Take a loaf of bread and eat it; after you have eaten it, its substance becomes nourishment and the rest excrement that nature throws away as something useless and pernicious to the body. Now if this bread told you: Why do you remove any being from me, since from my nature I am not content with being thus annihilated; and if I could defend myself against you, I would defend myself in order to preserve the being which is natural to all creatures: you would answer it; Bread, your being is arranged so as to sustain my body which is more worthy than you, and you must be more content with the end for which you are created than with your own being: because your being would not be valuable if it were not for its end. This is what gives you a dignity (worthiness), which can be reached only by your annihilation. So if you live only to arrive at your end, you will not care about your being, but you will say: Pull me immediately from my being, and put me in the operation of the end for which I was created. (*Life* Chapter 31)

4. See Annihilation Number 14.

5. When God purified the spirit of the imperfection acquired (contracted) by original and real (actual) sin, the spirit is then drawn out, and leaves for the place for which it was created: because hiding itself so beautiful, so clean, so worthy and so excellent, it can no longer find any which is appropriate and convenient for it that God himself which created it in his image and likeness, to which it has such a conformity and such a great inclination, that if it were not able to be transformed into and remain in him, all other places would be a hell for it. The spirit being reduced and led back to its proper being of purity with God and still alive, becomes such a subtle and small thing that man does not know it or understand it; it is like a drop of water thrown into the sea, which being looked for cannot be found to be anything other than the sea. For the spirit having been reduced to its proper being, and lost in God, is through sharing only God himself. – This last perfection cannot be spoken about, because all words, signs and examples would be only confusion and falseness, having no proportion in relation to it. It can only be said, that the soul which finds itself in this state, is from now on in a profound contentment without flavor which participates with the Blessed. (*Life* Chapter 35)

### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

6. The soul repeats this verse two times (my house was in repose) in this Canticle and in the previous one, because of the two parts of the soul, spiritual and sentient, which in order to reach the divine union of love must first be reformed, arranged and tranquillized concerning the sentient and the spiritual, in the way of the state of innocence which was in

Adam; although it is not at all free of the temptations of the inferior sphere; and so this verse which in the first Canticle meant repose from the inferior and sentient sphere, particularly in the second one takes up the superior and spiritual sphere: because for this reason it repeats it two times. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 24)

7. In saying, sucking the breasts of my mother; she means, sucking, drying up and extinguishing in the appetites and passions which are the breasts and the milk of our mother Eve in our flesh; which are a hindrance to this state; and so that being done I find you alone outside, that is to say, outside of all things and of myself in solitude and nakedness of spirit, which happens when the appetites are sucked up, that is to say dried up, and only there do I kiss you alone, that is to say, that my nature already alone and stripped of all temporal, natural and spiritual impurity has been united with your sole nature with any other means besides love: which is found only in spiritual marriage, which is the kiss that the soul gives to God, being where, no one scorns it or dares attack it while in this state: neither the Devil, nor flesh, nor the world, nor appetites importune it, seeing that what is said in the Canticle is accomplished here; (Chapter 2, Verses 11-12) Already winter has passed, the rains have gone and retreated, the flowers have appeared. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 28)

8. Because your mother, human nature, was raped in her first parents under the tree, there also under the tree of the Cross you have been atoned. (Couplet 29)

9. So this sensory sphere with all its powers, [Note strengths and weaknesses] strengths and weakness in this state, is already submissive to the spirit: from where it comes that there is a happy life there, similar to that of the state of innocence, where all the harmony and capacity of the sensory sphere of man serve as a greater recreation for him, and as a greater help in the knowledge and love of God in peace and concord with the superior sphere. Happy is the soul, which reaches this state! But which is that one, and we praise him, because he performed wonders in its life.

This couplet has been put here in order to show the tranquil and secure peace of the soul which arrives at this high state, not to make one believe that the desire that the soul shows here that the nymphs may be tranquil, as has been declared, is that for which it has worked, for they are already appeased, as has been said; seeing that is of the profiteers rather than the perfect, in whom the passions and movements reign little or not at all. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 32)

10. The reason for which the soul desired to enter into these caverns, was to wholly and perfectly, at least as much as the state of this life allows it, to reach what it had always intended to, namely the whole and perfect love which is given in this communication; and also to obtain perfectly, as for the spiritual, the rectitude and clearness (distinctness) of the state of original justice: and so in this couplet it says two things; one, that there he would show her, namely in this transformation of directions, what her soul was claiming to desire in all her deeds and intentions; which is to show her how to love perfectly [Pure love. There the soul learns how to love its Husband with the same love with which he loves himself.] her Husband as he loves himself, along with the other things that she declares in the following Canticle. The second is, that there he will also give her the purity and clearness that he gave her in the state of original justice in her forefathers, or rather, that he gave her the day of baptism, succeeding in clearing her of all her imperfections and darkness as she was then. (Couplet 38)

11. That does not happen in that way, without God in the said state of transformation having given the soul great purity, such has been that of the state of innocence or of baptism, which also the soul says that the Husband should give it immediately in the same transformation:

O life, you will give me  
What already with pure love  
You gave me the other day.

It calls the other day the state of original justice, and the day of baptism, in which the soul receives the purity that it says would be given to it in this union of love, because, as we have said, the soul arrives there in this state of perfections. (Couplet 38)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

12. St. Ambrose on this passage of the Canticle: (Chapter 5, Verse 3) I took off my tunic, how will I put it on? I washed my feet, how will I spoil them? She does not know how she will be able to take up the habit (attire) of the old man interwoven with the vices of error, which have been left in the washtub of regeneration; for through the study of correction, the forgetting of sins has already taken root in her: the force of accomplished improvement is so great that the soul goes back to the age of spiritual childhood, which ignores the paths of error and which cannot [Which is to say that she is so confirmed in the good, that only with difficulty can she sin.] admit the crime, even when it would like to, because it lost the habit of knowing the use of sin. (Sermon 22 on Psalms 118 [Psalms 119 in KJV]) (*Enlightenment on John of the Cross* Chapter 2, Section 2)



13. Albert the Great. All the more that you are stripped of the ghosts of all worldly and created things, and that by good will you are united to God in spirit, all the more will you approach the state of innocence and perfection. (*On Attachment to God* Chapter 8) (*Enlightenment on John of the Cross* Chapter 12, Section 3)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

14. We are therefore created in order to return and flow back into our infinite Love, actively, ardently, incomparably, purely and continually; by means of his active love strongly effective in us, and not otherwise: and all that according to the order and the effect of his love in us, and of ours respectively in him. For this result we must lovingly clear and dispense with all ours: For we could never have done or given anything, which can or must reward and satisfy our infinite Love, before whom every creature is a liar, and in comparison with man is nothing at all. (*Mirror of Flames of Divine Love* Chapter 5)

15. I have arrived in you up to here, my daughters and my Wife, to the last point of supreme satisfaction. I was avidly desirous of consuming you in me, until I made you die so gently in my arms in the infinite expanse of my Essence and my Love. It is for this, that I keep you so gently elapsed in the sweet and loving fierceness of my embraces, so that through this love equally active between us both, you may at last be made full and in possession of me in me, and from all that I am. You are then totally transformed into me above each degree of transforming love, since you have your originating essence that I am, in who you will live and reside like myself, without distinction [Union without distinction: this is perfect transformation.] or difference, in so far as it is possible: for I am your repose, your entire happiness and your total Paradise. (*Soliloquy* Verse 6)

16. Although in the first creation, if we had sinned, we would still be holy, just and innocent; which we are not now, as faith and experience also make it known to us; nevertheless our present state is better if we are allowed to consider our interest. —

How do the Angels not lose strength at the sight of a love as prodigious as yours, O my God, in the spot where poor men have fallen under the power of the Devils? That is, o eternal God, what we had become, and what we at present are in you, our loving Mender; but at your own infinite expense, and by very supernatural and ineffable means. (Contemplation Number 5)

17. We must by continual reflex be inclined into our eternal and original sea, without the created-being able to prevent us. — It is for this that we were born; it is how we live; it is through this practice that we lose ourselves in the abyss of our total like [Total loss without return.], into which we forever desire to plunge more and more without my return. (Letter 20)

18. We have lost one of our most intimate friends: but we must prefer his infinite good to ours. — Being re-plunged as he was into his origin, he knew how little worth all employ here below has: that is why he passionately and in profound resignation desired the dissolution of his body. — His holiness can be neither conceived or nor expressed: it consisted of his total re-fusion and unknown loss in the vast infinity of his origin, from where the flux and reflux were wonderfully in mystic and very mental notions and manifestations, which were flowing again incessantly by way of a large river into all its infinite sea. (Letter 35)

## SECTION 13 FAULTS (FLAWS, BLEMISHES)

### SHORT METHOD

As soon as the soul has fallen into some fault, or one has been lost, one must turn within: because this mistake having turned away from God, one must immediately turn oneself toward him, and suffer the penitence that he himself imposes.

It is of great importance to not worry because of these faults; because the worry only comes from a secret pride, and from a love of our excellence. We have difficulty in feeling what we are.

If we are discouraged, we are weakened more; and the reflection that we make on our [Note that weaknesses and faults are said.] mistakes, produces a chagrin, which is worse than the mistake itself. A truly humble soul is not amazed by its [Note that weaknesses and faults are said.] weaknesses; and the more it sees itself as wretched, the more does it abandon itself to God, and tries to keep itself nearby him, seeing the need that it has of his help. We must all the more keep this behavior, because God himself tells us: [Psalms 31:8 or in the King James Version Psalms 32:8] I will make understand all you must do. I will teach you the path through which you must walk, and I will constantly have my eye on you to guide you. (Chapter 18)

### CANTICLE

As the greatest graces of God always tend toward [This will be seen in the article on true humility.] the most profound knowledge of what we are, and as they would not be from him, if they did not give, according to their degree, a certain feeling for the misery of the creature, this soul hardly goes outside of the cellars of its Husband, without finding itself blocked. What is your blackness, o incomparable Lover? Tell us: we beseech you. I am black, it says, because I see in the favor of my divine Sun so many faults that I had overlooked until now: I am black because I am not purified of my property (ownership).

But however I do not fail to be beautiful, and beautiful like the tents of Cedar: because this trial knowledge of what I am, pleases my Husband extremely. I am beautiful; because having no stains willingly [Note, willingly.], my Husband makes me beautiful with his beauty. The more I am black in my eyes, the more I am beautiful in him.

I am still black by the crosses and the persecutions, which come to me from the outside: but I am beautiful like the tents of Solomon; since these crosses and this blackness made me like him.

I am black, because weaknesses appear on my exterior: but I am beautiful, because I am exempt from malice. (Chapter 1, Verse 4)

I beseech you my companions, who have not yet arrived so far ahead in the interior, you who are only in the first steps of spiritual life, do not judge me by the brown color that I wear on the outside, or by all my [In order to understand this, one must know that after the first tastes which had practically wiped away the faults, have passed, these faults were only lulled and not at all dead, the unction of the grace which holds the soul consists of gentleness: but when God wants to purify the depths, he allows these some faults which are really in the soul, although covered by the gentleness of grace, to appear when this unction has dried up: then this soul which believed itself to already be wholly divine and no longer touching the earth, finds itself natural again, wholly unburdened. That was necessary for it in order to sink it into God by removing it from the love of itself. But as one must never by oneself put oneself in this drought that St. John of the Cross calls Night, it tells its companions, that they must neither be scandalized by its faults which are involuntary and for its humiliation, nor either want to imitate it by not working with all their strength to destroy there own which are real and voluntary.] exterior faults, either real or apparent, for that does not happen like to the beginner souls, lack of love and of courage: but it is that my divine Sun, by his continual, ardent and burning glances, discolored me. It removed my natural color from me, so as to leave me only the color that its ardor wants to give me. It is the force of love, which dries my skin and browns it; and not the distancing from love. This black is an advancement, and not a fault; but an advancement that you must not consider, you who are still young, and too tender to [Note that it says; Do not imitate me in that. One does not therefore put everyone in the advanced states since we are warned against that.] imitate it; because the blackness that you would give yourself would be a fault (flaw): it, in order to be good, must come only from the Sun of justice, which for its glory and for the greatest good of the soul, eats and devours this dazzling color of the outside which was blinding it itself, even though it makes it admirable to the others, to the detriment of the Husband.

My brothers seeing me black in this way, wanted to oblige me to take up the active life again, and keep the exterior without applying myself to killing the passions within: For a long time I fought with them; but finally not being able to resist them, I did what they wanted; and by applying myself to the outside, to things which are foreign to me, I did not guard my vineyard, which is my depths, where my God lives. That is my only occupation and the only vineyard that I must guard: and when I did not guard mine, when I did not make myself be attentive to my God, I guarded the others

still less. This is the torment that one usually makes to the souls, when one sees that the great occupation of the inside causes the outside to be neglected in something; and that because of this the soul totally shut up on the inside can no longer apply itself to certain small faults that the Husband corrected at another time. (Chapter 1, Verse 5)

The faithful Lover begs the Husband to remove the small leaks [The leaks are the impotence where she is placed from the practice of the good external works that she was formerly performing, and the experience of her faults. That is so necessary in order to purify the soul from the attachment that it has to its own works, and make it know the dependence that it must have on grace, that without that she would be forever self possessing, and she would stay sunk in herself, as it will be seen when Property and Purification are spoken about.] which make up the numerous small faults, which begin to appear; because they spoil this interior vineyard, which is, she says, in bloom; and that is what makes this vineyard more pleasant, and which makes her love it more, hoping to soon see the fruit of it.

What will you do poor soul, to abandon (surrender) this vineyard to which you are attached without knowing it? Ah, the Master himself will put little foxes there who will ravage it and will mow down its flowers, and will do strange damage to it. If he did not act in this way, you are so in love with yourself that you would never leave. (Chapter 2, Verse 15)

This relates to what has been written about the examination in the article Confession and to what will be written in Property (that is why there is very little to cite).

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

1. She lost all hope for herself, judging the personal part of man to be not at all incurable; and did not want to lose any time thinking of and seeking some cure: but she put all her confidence in God her Love, and said to him: Lord, I make a present of myself to you; because I no longer want what I must do, being fit only to make a Hell for myself. That is why, Lord, I would indeed like to make an exchange with you, and give my wicked being into your hands, because you alone can hide it and engulf it in your goodness; and because you gave me your pure and clear love, which extinguishes all other love in me, annihilates me totally to you, and keeps me so occupied in you, that nothing else can remain in me. To which her very gentle Lord responded, that he was content. At that moment her own wickedness was removed from memory, so that she no longer remembered it. (*Dialogue* Book 1, Chapter 12)

2. See Purification Number 28.

3. If some suspicion of sin comes to this soul, it has no satisfaction until its spirit is delivered from it and satisfied. The soul, which lives in, this loving peace can remain in confusion either with self or with the others. That if with permission from God it comes about that such spirits frequenters (regular visitors) in this divine love are confused, they are almost unbearable; because they are outside the tranquil paradise where they live and if God did not put them back in their accustomed state, it would be almost impossible for them to be able to live. (Book 3, Chapter 8)

### ST. TERESA

4. That happened to me when I was trying to get the others to give themselves up to prayer, as I already said; and on this subject I am very knowing at my expense: because as on one side they heard me say great things from the good there is in praying, and because on the other side they saw me so stripped of virtues; they were tempted and confused from being such, I took up prayer: and with much reason; all the more because as they have told me since, they did not know how one could be compatible with the other. And I was the cause that believing some good about me, they did not take as bad that, which consequently was so, because I did it sometimes. And the Devil does this; for it seems that he makes use of the virtues that we have to justify, in what he can, the evil that he claims: which is very detrimental in a Community, however slight it may be. How much more pernicious could what I was doing be, seeing that the evil was so great? So that it happens that in several years there were only three of them who profited from what I told them: but since the time when Our Lord gave me the virtues, several of them made gains in two or three years as I will tell later. (*Life* Chapter 13)

5. Now beginning to leave the opportunities alone and giving myself up more to prayer, his divine Majesty began to give me his graces; in which he seemed to desire nothing except that I want to receive them: he gave usually me [Note that she had considerable faults even though she had the prayer of quietude and union.] the prayer of quietude, and often that of union which lasted a long time. (*Life* Chapter 23)

6. I will remain for some time in this pain and agitation of spirit, until after a strong beating that I endured interiorly, accompanied by fear, I resolved myself to negotiate with a spiritual person, to learn from him what was any prayer, and to find light in the path that I was taking, so lost was I, and to do my best to not offend God; for the weakness that I saw in me, as I said, made me so timid.

O my God what great deceit, that desiring to be good, I withdrew myself from the good! The Devil must be making great efforts at the beginning of virtue: for I could not earn this by myself: He certainly knows that the care for a soul is to deal with the friends of God; to which I found no means to resolve myself. I was waiting beforehand to be improved by myself like when I left prayer: and it is possible I would have never have done it: because I was plunged so far into little things of bad habits, which I could not persuade myself were pernicious, that I needed help and that I was being given a hand to pull me out of that. Blessed be Our Lord: for at last it was he who first came to my aid. (*Life* Chapter 23)

7. Do not think that even though these souls have such great desires and such resolutions to do no imperfection in anything that they do not commit many and even sins, still without warning; for Our Lord helps them especially for this outcome. Now when I speak about sins, I mean only the venial; in so far as for the mortal ones, from what they understand, they are few of them. (*Chastisement VII Dem.* Chapter 4)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

8. As for the doubt that one can have, namely, since the things of God themselves do good to the soul, overtake it and assure it, why in this night does God obscure for it the appetites and the powers, even with regard to good things, in such a way that it can neither enjoy them or practice them any more than the others, and still less in some fashion? I answer that then the emptiness of its operation and its taste, even concerning spiritual things, is very appropriate to it; because it has base and impure powers and appetites; and so although these powers were given the taste and communication of supernatural and divine things, they could only receive it in a base way: for as the Philosopher says, all which is received is in he who receives it according to his way and disposition to receive it. From where it comes that [These are the reasons for which God removes this shining sorrow from the outside, and puts small leaks, which are the afore mentioned powers.] because these natural powers have neither the purity, nor the strength, nor the sufficiency to receive and taste supernatural things in their manner which is divine, but only in their own manner; they must also be obscured concerning these divine things in order to have a perfect purgation, so that being severed from, purged of and annihilated by that side, they lose the base way of operating and receiving, and so that in this way all the powers and appetites of the soul come to be disposed and attempt to nobly receive, feel and taste that which is divine; which cannot be, if first the old man does not die. From where it comes that all which is spiritual, if it is derived from on high, communicated by the Father of lights to the will and human appetite, in some way that the taste and appetite of man with his power is exerted in God, and it seems to them that they taste it, nevertheless they do not taste it in this divine and perfect manner. On this subject, if this were the place for it, we could show how there are several people who have tastes, affections and operations of their powers concerning God and the spiritual things, who perhaps think that this is supernatural and spiritual; and it is possible that they are only very natural and human deeds and appetites. For as they have them in all other things, they have them still with the same temperament in those things which are good, by a certain natural ability that they have to move their appetite and powers to whatever thing there may be. If we find the opportunity in what remains, perhaps we will deal with it. – It suffices to know here, that so that the interior actions and movements of the soul can come to be moved by God nobly and divinely, they must be first be put to sleep, obscured and tranquil in the natural part concerning all their ability and operation until it loses strength.

Therefore, o spiritual soul, when you see your appetite dimmed, your affections dried up and contracted, your powers incapacitated for all interior practice, do not worry about that; on the contrary consider it fortunate, since God is delivering you from yourself, removing from you the faculties with which you could not operate so completely, so perfectly or so assuredly, because of this purity and heaviness, like at present God taking you by the hand leads you into darkness like a blind man, where and through where you do not know and would never be able to find the path, no matter how good were your feet and your eyes.

The reason also why the soul not only walks securely when it is in this darkness, but also with much more gain and profit; is because commonly [God gives the virtues through the experience of their opposite: for example, faith is made more pure by the temptations against faith; because the torments that the soul suffers in these things strengthen it in that itself where it finds itself most opposed, because of the firmness with which it keeps itself attached to God in the storms which are arising on the outside, (its will and affection being entirely removed from that), and attaches itself all the more to God because the contrariness that it feels afflicts it more, as will be seen in Temptation.] when the soul once again receives some improvement and it is profiting, it is through which it understands and thinks the least; on the contrary through that which it ordinarily sees well it loses itself. For having never felt this newness which dazzles it and makes it become lost in its first steps of proceeding, it believe itself to be lost, rather than profiting and in the good path; as it sees that it is lost concerning that which it knew and tasted, and it is led through where it does not know or taste: in the same way that the traveler who goes to foreign and unknown lands, goes through new unknown paths which he has

no experience of, on the words of others, and not according to what he knows about it, (for it is obvious that he could never arrive at unknown lands but through new and unknown roads and leaving those which he knows). Therefore the soul in this way when it is profiting more it walks in darkness and without knowing. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 16)

9. When the soul says in darkness and in hiding, that is to say that as long as it was going in darkness in the manner that we have said, it was covered and hidden from the Devil, from his [There is no deceit in the path of faith, as there is in that of feelings or sight.] ruses and his traps. [Infusions Number 5] Now the reason for which the soul in the darkness of this contemplation goes about free and exempt from the traps of the Devil, [The contemplation is free and exempt from the traps of the Devil.] is because the infused contemplation that it has here, is poured passively and secretly into the soul aside and apart from the senses and powers as much interior and exterior of the sensory sphere. And from this comes not only that it is hidden and free from the hindrance that these powers can bring to it with their nature and their weaknesses; but also from the Devil, who, if it is not through the sensory powers, cannot penetrate or know what is in the soul or what happens there. – Then as the Devil sees that he cannot reach and contradict them in the depths of the soul, he does all he can to confuse and arouse the sensory sphere, which is where he can reach. –

However quite often when the communication of such contemplation purely seizes the spirit and exerts its force in it, all the diligence that the Devil had made use of to prevent it brings him back no profit; and as much as it needs the soul then receives a new love and purpose with a more secure peace. For in feeling the seditious presence of the enemy, an admirable thing that without knowing how that came about, it enters further into the interior depths, feeling indeed strongly that it is being put into a refuge, where it sees itself more distanced and hidden from the enemy; and thus the peace and the enjoyment that the Devil wants to remove from it, are augmented in it: and for now all this vanity befalls it only on the outside, that it knows clearly and goes about rejoicing in possessing so securely this tranquil peace and flavor of the Husband in hiding, that neither the world nor the Devil can either give or remove, the soul feeling about this the truth of what the Wife says in the Canticle. (Chapter 3, Verses 7-8) See that the Bed of Solomon is surrounded by sixty strong men because of night frights: and it feels this peace and strength, even though often it feels the flesh and bones being tormented on the outside. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 23)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

10. In this state it is imperfection to desire God as if he were absent. – There is also found in this desire a deed, which prevents total annihilation. (Part 3, Chapter 10, Number 9)

11. There are imperfections, as St. Bonaventure says, in thinking about God with the imagination; because one must not and cannot do it: one must not because it is an act contrary to annihilation: one cannot because of the cited reasons; like because God is wholly super natural, but though is a natural thing: God is greater than us and above us, but our thought is lesser and below us. –

It is some kind of imperfection to cast a glance onto God other than the simple memory of him.

Finally it is imperfection to observe too many these same or similar imperfections: for in this way the soul is too occupied and makes it too active. One must therefore not pursue them, unless very subtly, namely with a glance which passes quickly like a flash of lightning.

Now one must not think that so many steps bring multiplicity into this exercise: all the more because though there are still many imperfections, they are nevertheless remedied by a single perfection: For as they all come from one cause, namely, from existence, they are also remedied by one unique opposing cause, namely, non-existence; for as all imperfection is elevated when man is something, so will all perfection be born when he is annihilated, since God alone lives and reigns. (Part 3, Chapter 10, Numbers 10-12)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

12. Let us again present the sweet Jesus, Theotime, before Pilate, where for the love of us the guards, ministers of his death, take off all his clothes, and even remove his skin, tearing at it with blows from switches and whips; as afterward his soul was stripped from his body and the body of his life by death on the cross: but three days later by his most holy resurrection the soul was dressed again in his body, and the body of his immortal flesh, and clothed in different garments, of a pilgrim or gardener, or some other way, according to what the glory of his Father and the salvation of men required. Love did all that, Theotime; and it is also love which entering into a soul, in order to make it happily die to itself and relive in God, strips it of all human desires and of any value it has of itself, which is not attached any less to the spirit than the skin to the flesh, and at last bares it of all the most admirable affections, such as those that it had in spiritual consolation, in the practice of piety, and in the perfection of the virtues which seemed to be the proper life for the devoted soul. Then the soul has reason to cry out: (Canticle 5 Verse 3) I removed my garments, how will I reclothe myself? I washed my feet of all sorts of affections, who will I dirty them a second time? (Job 1:21) Naked I came forth from the hand of God, and naked will I return. The Lord had given me many desires, the Lord took them away from me: blessed by his Holy name.

(Virtue, Number 17) Yes, Theotime, the same Lord who made us desire the virtues in our beginning, who makes us practice them on all occasions, it is he himself who removes from us [Deprivation (Stripping). Explanation of the Canticle Chapter 1, Verse 5] the affection for the virtues and for all the spiritual exercises, so that with more tranquility, purity and simplicity are we fond of nothing but the good pleasure of the Divine Majesty. For as the beautiful and chaste Judith had in her closets beautiful clothes and nevertheless had no fondness for them, nor ever adorned herself with them, except when inspired by God she went to go destroy Holophern: in this way although we have learned the practice of virtues and the exercise of devotion; we must have no affection for them, or dress our heart in them, except that it is pleasing to God. And as Judith remained always in mourning clothes, except on that occasion, when God wanted her to adorn herself; so must we peacefully remain dressed in our misery and abjection among our imperfections and weaknesses, until God [That is what is called resurrection.] exalts us to the practice of excellent actions.

(Resurrection Number 12 and Virtue Number 18) One cannot remain in this nakedness for a long time, stripped of all kinds of affections: that is why, according to the advise of the Saint Apostle [Colossians 3:9-10] after we have removed the clothes of the old Adam, [This is the conduct that God holds our Wife to in the Canticles.] we must dress ourselves in the clothes of the new man who is Jesus Christ: for having renounced every thing, indeed even the affection for the virtues, in order to want neither this one nor that one, nor any other, as far as divine good pleasure brings us to it; we must once again clothe ourselves in several affections, and perhaps in the same that we had renounced and resigned: but one must be clothed a second time, no longer because they are pleasant, useful, honorable and fitting to satisfy the love that we have for ourselves; but because they are pleasant for God, useful to his honor, and destined for his glory. (*One the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 16)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

13. It is not necessary to speak about this to the man, who only has a spirit of good nature, and who remains and acts only in the senses. For he will never know anything better than good works, and will never renounce himself, as he needs to, he sees himself impotent and without means to do so. That is why the active life which is more in the senses than in reason, is so delicious to these people; and there they willingly endure great sorrows because of the great rewards that they hope for, from it: but they are in that full of their own paths, appetites, pursuits and property, totally ignorant of themselves and of the true good in himself. They never want to lose themselves however little it may be, and if they lose themselves sometimes because of persuasions (convictions), it is only with an extreme dread of losing their feelings and their tastes of God. [Habit] This makes it so that they do not lose themselves and do not give of themselves in true abandon but little by little and the least that they can, not being able to believe that the renounced, indifferent and resigned life is true holiness. Errors, darkness and misery, which proceed from man taking for himself the gift and the taste of God, which is given to him by God only to incline him toward holiness; this taste is a means for acquiring the habit of holiness and this habit it the end of it, of which the true acts are the true renounced life. For to understand what such a life is, if not the deeds of all the holy habits, practiced not so much in self as above oneself, it be lost completely in God in the Majesty of whom one always wants to satisfy and not in the least oneself. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 11)

14. It happens sometimes that spiritual people can be encountered among sensory objects, capable of touching their senses in an extraordinary way, and of moving their passions. For example, they will sometimes be so stirred to laughter, that it appears noticeably, without them being able to prevent it. That does not fail to amaze certain weak and infirm people, who seeing that these objects do amuse them inside themselves, admire how we are ourselves drawn so easily to laughter, without knowing the cause of it: And consequently they always overlook it, until they themselves by their faithful acts arrive at the same degree of love and consummated life. They do not see that this touches us only superficially [See what is said about the purification of gold. Short Method Chapter 24, Number 4] and on the outside.

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Now the reason why ordinary people who have a good interior action, seem to have more strength to resist these foolish objects than the rest of us, is that we are completely stripped and disarmed of our active forces in the senses, and we can do almost nothing but await the blows, without being able to stave them off. It is not this way for the others, because their active force, while they have it, serves them as a rampart against all similar movements. But also when they are in barrenness, and they have nothing for the defense of their senses, they find themselves completely overwhelmed by the efforts of such foolishness. For their way of enduring their barrenness, and of fighting this folly, is not like our ways and manners of fighting. It is a completely different thing for them and for us. (*Mirror of Conscience* Treatise 2, Number 54)

15. Nevertheless it is a strange thing that there can be found men who have arrived at and are consummated in this state, who leave in order to reason and speculate in the activity of their senses, so that they come to be almost continually agitated by whirlwinds and movements of worry about all things, which they are prevented and cut off from entry to their heart, prowling constantly everywhere on the outside. ---

Some certainly see this disorder in themselves, believing themselves to be impure and completely inept for true introversion; and nevertheless they do not desist from this kind of ordinary practice to embrace the exercises, which would be more fitting and useful for their good and interior. They would without doubt need to be pushed without compassion, and should pray God very insistently to put them in the labors and exercises of men without order or discretion: but as this is not what they desire, and as on the contrary they dread this like death; they will remain forever not mortified on the inside, totally uncontrolled, captive and strongly dominated by their own excellence. (On Simplicity Treatise 2, Number 34)

16. Charity in the perfect knows well how to be patiently annoyed, and humbly indignant. That being unknown to men of mediocre virtue, they judge us to be carried away and beaten by passion all the times that happens to us; nevertheless, if we lacked this Holy zeal of charity, we would believe ourselves to be in disorder and offending God. This is why when we converse with them, we do not with this practice thwart the true perfection; since to those that we suppose to be complete lawlessness, and often it is expedient for them to do things of that nature. (On Simplicity Number 38)

SECTION 14  
DESIRE. GOD DESIRES TO GIVE HIMSELF TO US

SHORT METHOD

Nothing is easier than having God and tasting him. He is more in us than ourselves. He has more desire to give himself to us that we have to possess him. (Chapter 1, Number 5)

God, which asks only to communicate himself to his creature, sends it abundant graces and a trail taste of his presence, which makes it very easy. (Chapter 2, Number 4)

But the Word has the life in him; and as in his nature he is communicative, he desires to communicate to men. (Chapter 21, Number 6)

Now all the desire of God is to give himself to his creature, according to the capacity that he has put in it: and one fears being let go to God! (Chapter 24, Number 12)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. This immense and overflowing sea of divine light is open to all men, and always ready to communicate itself. (On the Heavenly Hierarchy, Chapter 9)

2. (Consistency, Number 2): We say then that this divine Beatitude; which is deity by nature, principle of Deification, from which the deified being is and proceeds to those who are deified, by its goodness has made a gift the hierarchy for the benefit and for the deification of all the gifted essences of understanding and reason. (On the Ecclesiastes Hierarchy, Chapter 1)

3. It will always be true that divine light constantly sends its beneficent rays on intellectual sights, and it is in their power to receive them, being always present to them and always ready to communicate to them the goods which are his in a way worthy of the goodness of God. [If God measures his gifts by what he is, and not by what we are, will one be surprised by their magnificence?] And after he gave us his only Son, what gift can he make to us, all God that he is, which is not less than that one? (Chapter 2)

4. I see that this divine goodness has such great care of the soul, that there is no one who in order to overtake everybody, even when he is assured of winning them, could have it so great. Seeing therefore with how much love and care he gives us all the provisions necessary to lead us in his country, I am constrained from saying that this good God seems to be our servant. (Life, Chapter 12)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

5. As for us, since we would not know how to dispose men to that, nor make them better, it is for us to make our flight more and more active and light in order to come to the penetration of everything with your love, in the very bottom of the depths of Him that you are, o my Love and my Life. For you have more desire and eagerness to communicate yourself, than you have power to do it, if it is permitted to speak thus; because there is no vessel among the mortals who can contain as much of your grace and love as you desire to put in them. Indeed I believe in this truth, that there have been a great number of Saints who could be it more. (Contemplation, Number 8)



## SECTION 15

NON-DESIRE: NOT BEING ABLE TO DESIRE OR ASK. Choice, wants. All is included under the name of desire.

[SEE INDIFFERENCE]

### CANTICLE

One must not believe that a soul of the degree of this Wife is eager for the sentient presence and the sweet and continual enjoyment of the Husband: not in the least. It was that she formerly had, to ardently desire this charming possession: for that was necessary to make his walk and go to him; but now [In order to receive this communication above all feelings, one must let oneself be stripped of the sentient presence, which has been seen; (See Abandon Number 25) that which is perfection at one time, is a fault in another.] it is a hindrance that she must not admit, her Beloved possessing her perfectly in his essence and in his powers in a very real and invariable manner, above all time, all means and all places. She now has only to sign after moments of distinct and noticeable enjoyment: Besides which she is in such a whole disappropriation from all things that she would no longer know how to desire for anything, not even for the joy of Paradise. This state is even the sign that she is possessed through the center. That is why she swears to the Husband that she is certainly content that he goes where he pleases. – Not that she scorns or rejects the divine visits and comforts so: she has too much respect and submission for the operation of God: But it is that these sorts of graces are no longer in season for a soul as annihilated as she is; and who is established in the enjoyment of the center; and that having lost all will in the will of God, she can no longer want anything. –

The indifference of this Lover is so great, that she can no longer enjoy happiness [poucher] either from the side of enjoyment, or from the side of deprivation. Death and life are the same to her: and although her love is incomparably stronger than it has ever been, she nevertheless cannot desire Paradise, because she remains in the hands of her Husband, like the things which do not exist. That must be the effect of the most profound annihilation. – She is incapable of desiring to help the others and cannot even do it but by a particular order from providence. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

### EXPLANATION

Before citing the Authorities for desiring nothing, I believe I should put the explanation that I took the liberty of giving to Mr. de Meaux, one year ago after he wanted to take the trouble to see me. Here it is, with some other explanations. As it seemed to me that this was the principal passage, which he dwelled on, I believe that he will no longer do so when he sees all the Authorities, which are here.

There are two kinds of desires: there is a mutable or bounding desire of distinct and noticeable desires. There is an immutable desire, which is essential to man, to return to his final end.

There is an excited love, which has flames and fervor; and as this love is distinct it is accompanied by a noticeable desire.

There is a love lain in its end by the death of personal will; and the desire of those who loves themselves and search for favors in the love they have for God.

Now that does not prevent God from changing the dispositions, for a moment making the soul feel the weight of its body which will make it say [Philippians 1:23 – *I want to be freed from the bonds of the body and be with Jesus Christ.*] Cupio dissolve et esse cum Christo. At other time feeling no more then a disposition of love (charity) for its brothers, without a return into or any relation to itself, it [Romans 9:3] will wish to be accursed and separated from Jesus Christ for his brothers. These dispositions which appear to be contrary, agree very well in an estate which does not vary: in such a way that although the beatitude of God in himself and for himself, in which the sentient desires of the soul have almost flowed out and rested, makes up the essential happiness of this soul, God does not fail to himself to make these desires when it pleases him. These desires are no longer the desires of long age, which are in particular will; but moved and aroused desires of God himself, without the soul reflecting on itself: because God who keeps it turned directly towards him, makes it desire, like its other acts, without reflection; so that it cannot see them if he does not show them to it, or if his own words do not give it some knowledge of them by giving it to the others. It is certain that in order to desire for oneself, one must want for oneself. Now all care of God being directed toward engulfing the will of the creature of his, he also absorbs all known desire in the love of his divine will.

There is still another reason which makes God remove and put the sentient desires in the soul as it pleases him: It is [that God wanting to distribute something to the soul, he makes it desire this and to have a reason for giving it this and fulfill it: for it is indubitable] that he [Psalms 10:17 (KJV)] fulfills the desires of this soul and the preparation of its

heart: and even the Holy Spirit desiring for it and in it, its desires are prayers and requests [Romans 8:26] of the Holy Spirit: and Jesus Christ says in this soul: [John 11:42] I know that you always hear me. A vehement desire for death in such a soul would be almost a certainty of death. To desire humiliations, is certainly below desiring the enjoyment of God: nevertheless it pleased God to humiliate me much through slander, he gave me a hunger for humiliation. I call it hunger to distinguish it from desire. At other times, he puts in this soul to pray for particular things. It feels at that moment that its prayer is not at all formed by its will, but by the will of God; for it is not even free to pray for what pleases it, nor when it pleases the soul to do so; but when it prays, the soul is always fulfilled. It attributes nothing to itself because of that; but the soul knows that it is he who possesses it, who is fulfilled himself in it. It seems to me that I understand that infinitely better than I explain it.

It is the same way for the sentient yearning, or even the noticeable one, which is much less than sentient. When one body of water is unequal to another which is discharged into it that happens with rapid movement and noticeable noise; but when the two are even, the yearning is no longer evident. There is one nonetheless, but it is imperceptible, so that it is true to say that in a sense there isn't any more. As long as the soul is not entirely united to its God in a union that I call permanent to distinguish it from the fleeting unions, it feels its yearning for God. The impulsiveness of this penchant, for not being a perfect thing, as not very enlightened people think it is a fault, and marks the distance between God and the soul. But when God united himself to the soul in such a way that he received it in him, where he keeps it [Colossians 3:3] hidden with Jesus Christ. The soul finds a repose which excludes all sentient yearning, and which is such that only experience can make it understand. This love is full of repose, and is not perceived by the soul because of its tranquility and because of the death of the personal will.

Love necessarily encompasses desire, but desire is in conformity with love. When the soul is distanced from its God, love is impetuous as well as desire; there is the arousal which moves desire toward its goal; the more it approaches its goal, the more its impetuosity diminishes.

But what has united the Lover to the Loved One; love and desire are full of repose, and are as if dead and fallen into the all, (which is a perfectly tranquil although stronger love.)

There is a way of going to God by the path of elevation above self; and it is accompanied by raptures and delights: there is another way of going forth from self by the path of annihilation and nakedness; and that one has no ecstasy: it is a path entirely of death; and through this death the soul goes forth from self and passes through permanent ecstasy into its divine Object. That one may be able from this life one enter into God, lose oneself there through the complete death of will in what it has fitting for the soul, and dissimilar from that of God, this is theirs [no one who has experienced it can doubt it.]

This is what St. John call remaining in charity. [I John 4:16] Whoever remains in love (charity) remains in God. One must see the Epistles. This is what Jesus Christ calls [John 17:22-23] unity and accomplishment of unity; St. Paul [II Corinthians 3:18] transformation; the Blessed John of the Cross Deification; (See God teaches the soul Number 7) as does Brother John of St. Samson (See God teaches the Soul Number 13, Transformation Number 45, Union Number 76); his works being stronger than what I wrote.

When the soul has flown out in its God through a total loss of itself in him, it has lost all property: it is then like very pure gold: which does not prevent it from being able to fall, there being no flawlessness in this life. But God does not allow it in the least: that could happen only through the greatest infidelity and even spitefulness, like [that of] Lucifer. That, which makes the purity of this soul, is the loss of its will into that of God: it cannot sin without pulling its will from that of God, which is difficult. [See] St. John in his Letters [I John 3:6, 9 & 5:18], St. Catherine of Genes [*In Her Life* Chapter 32 in the end. Also see Consistency Number 5]. [Brother John of St. Samson, see Consistency Number 36]. That does not prevent these souls from having certain exterior flaws which come from them giving so little attention to themselves, but which are exempt from malice; and even God makes use of these flaws, which are slight to hide them from themselves and from the others.

It seems to me to be easy to conceive that a person, who puts his happiness in God alone, can no longer desire his own happiness. No one can put all his happiness in God alone, except he who remains in God through charity.

When the soul is there in him, it no longer desires any other happiness than that of God in himself and for himself: desiring no other happiness, all personal felicity, even the glory of heaven for self, it can no longer make it happy; nor consequently the object of its desire. Desire inevitably follows love. If my love is in God alone, and for God alone, without any return to me; my desire is in God alone without relation to me.

This desire in God no longer has the intensity of a loving desire, which does not enjoy what it desires: but it has the repose of a fulfilled and satisfied desire. For God being infinitely perfect and happy, and the goodness of this soul being in the perfection and happiness of its God, its desire cannot have the activity of ordinary desire, which waits for what it desires. That is therefore the resource of the state of the soul, and that which makes it no longer perceive the good desires of those who love God in relation to themselves, or is not a repose in the tasted peace, in the gentleness and sweetness of an evident presence of God; but it is a repose in God himself, and which shares in his immensity, as much as it has extent, simplicity and clearness. The light of the Sun which would be limited by mirrors would have something in it more brilliant than the pure light of the air: however these mirrors which enhance its brilliance terminate it and remove its purity. When the ray is terminated by something, it is filled with atoms, and it is distinguished better than in the air: but it lacked its purity and simplicity.

The more simple and pure things are, the more range they have. Nothing more simple than water, nothing more pure; but this water has an admirable range because of its fluidity. It also has a quality, which has no particular shape; it takes on all sorts of shapes. It has no taste, and takes on all tastes: it has no color, and takes on all colors. The spirit and the will in this state are so pure and so simple, that God given them such color and taste as pleases him, like with this water, which is sometimes red, sometimes blue, finally imprinted with whatever color or taste one wants to give it. It is certain that although this water is given various colors that are wanted because of its simplicity and purity, it is not however true to say that the water in itself has taste and color; since in its nature it is without taste and color: and it is this lack of taste and color which makes it susceptible to all taste and color. This is what I feel about my soul: it has nothing that it can distinguish or know in itself or of itself; that is what makes its purity: but it has all that it is given, and as the soul is given that, without retaining any of it for self. If you asked this water what its quality is, it would answer you that it is to have none. You would say to it; But I saw you red: I believe it; I am nevertheless not red: That is not my nature; I do not even think about what is made of me, about all the tastes and colors I am given. It is the same way with shape as with color. As water is fluid (and without consistency), it takes on all the shapes of the places where it is put, in a round or square vase. If it had its own consistency, it could not take on all the shapes, tastes, odors and colors.

Souls are proper for only a few things as long as they preserve their own consistency: the whole plan of God being: through the death of themselves make them lose anything of their own that they have, to move, act in, change and imprint them as it pleases him. In such a way that it is true that they have all shapes; and it is true that they have none of them: which feeling only their simple and pure nature without singular impression, when they speak or write about themselves, makes them deny that all the shapes are in them: because they do not speak according to the variable dispositions in which they are put: they pay no attention to that; but to the depths of what they are, which is their always subsisting state. I beseech you Monsieur to excuse the expressions, and if I speak badly, rectify me. If one could show the soul like the face, I would not want it; it seems to me, to hide any of my blemishes.

I still have this fault that I say things as they come to me, without knowing if I am speaking well or badly. When I am saying or writing them, to me they appear as clear as day; after that I see them as things that I never learned, much less wrote. Nothing but emptiness remains in my mind, which is not awkward. It is a simple emptiness which is not disturbed either by the multitude of thoughts or by their unfruitfulness. I pray to God if he wants to make what I cannot explain better understood.

Although the soul may write about the most elevated states of the life interior, it does not believe because of this that it possesses them; and when it writes about itself, it writes with such abstraction, that it does not think that it wrote that. It is the same way with the other writings: the soul knows nothing before writing; when it wrote it no longer remembers, even though while writing the things appeared as clear as day to it.

## AUTHORITIES

### CASSIEN

1. Prayer is perfect when all love, all desire, all application, all thought, all effort, all that we see, we do and we hope for in God, and when this unity between the Father and the Son has passed into us. Then we obtain the result of the prayer of the Savior who said to his Father; my Father [John 17:22-23] that they may be one same thing as I am one with you. I am in them and you are in me, so that they may also be consummated in the unity. (Conference 10, Chapter 6)

### RUSBROCHE

2. The man who has renounced his own will and who has given all for all, without desiring anything but what God wants, is the most free of all men: however God in order to test him and sanctify him sometimes removes him from his right, places him on his left, plunges him from heaven into hell, and having torn him away from all the gentleness, allows him to be overwhelmed with miseries so that he sees himself abandoned and scorned not only by all the creatures, but by God himself. (*Spiritualistic Wedding* Chapter 67)

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. See Property Number 4.

4. Thus some have burning desires which are raised toward heaven, and which nevertheless are not exempt from the temptation of human and carnal affections. From this comes that although with very much eagerness they ask me for the goods of heaven, nevertheless this movement is not entirely pure and for my glory alone. The desire that you have

for heaven is often like theirs; it is for this that he is filled with worry. That which is infected with self-love and self-interest is never pure and truly perfect. (*Imitation of Jesus Christ* Book 3, Chapter 49, Section 2)

#### HARPHIUS

5. And you must keep as a general rule, that all we can ask God, or desire from him, as soon as he does not go to entire mortification and entire renunciation of self for the love of God, is mixed in nature and self pursuit in the things themselves which appear completely divine. (Book 2, Chapter 9)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

6. This purity and clearness of love was ineffable and surpassed human capacity: that she had this love in such great abundance, that she could not understand that he could increase it more: because she was so filled with it [Note that the impotence of desiring comes only from fullness. The capacity of the soul being full, and God enlarging it with excess of fullness, he fills her in proportion to how much he increases her; in such a way that the soul cannot desire, since all desire is an emptiness and she is full: moreover desire belongs to will, which finds itself so filled with its goal, which is the will of God. Perfect conformity having united it to the will of God, and then changed in her, the emptiness of her own will and of her desires is filled by divine will, which moves her and lets her want and desire only what pleases him.] that she could not desire any more of it than that which kept it fully satiated. – This grace that God gives to man surpasses all human desire and thought so much that he feels, in this life that he is made a participant in the glory of the Blessed. (*Life* Chapter 18)

7. See Mortification Number 1.

8. God converting a soul to self, rules, or lays out and arranges its power, until he draws them outside of their own operations; so that understanding can no longer understand, memory retain, or will desire. – It cannot think anything [The soul ignores itself and is ignored.] about itself, as in which state it is: it no longer has any choice of (end) goal, or desire in heaven and on earth. It can with this love, to love only those that God wants it to love; which does not allow another soul [The soul ignores itself and is ignored.] to know this love in it, except one which approaches this same pure and clean love, and in the same way that it feels the love in its heart. (Chapter 32)

9. In the year 1507, hearing the Office for the Dead, a desire to die came upon her. The soul longed to go out from the body and unite itself to God; the body also desired it, to get away from the great torment that this flame of love, which was burning it, gave it. Yet the soul did not carry the desire in its will, and it was only the natural desires of the soul and the body to leave their pain. But because her Love wanted to purify it in everything and extinguish all desire in her heart, to make an agreeable lodging for her; and because the desire was not of the will, when she felt this remorse, she said; “Love, I want only you in the way that it pleases you. But at least if you do not want me to die again, or even that I long to die, let me go see the others die and be buried, so that I may see them on the point of enjoying the great good that you desire for me. Her Love again consented to that: and so during a certain amount of time she went to see those who were dying in the Hospital, die and be buried. Then this desire and will to see others die, was completely dampened, her purified heart uniting itself more tightly in her gentle Love.

One day this Monk told her, that she could die all of a sudden; immediately the joy or desire to die was reawaken in her, and she said to him: I feel a joy and this interior word awaken in me: o if such a hour came: there this thought ceases forthwith; and I do not want there to be a single spark of desire in that.

From that day until the end all desire was extinguished in her and she was united and transformed to the will of her gentle Love. So she knew that all desire is a lack of perfection; because the soul having some desire, does not yet have God fully, which is all things: but the soul perfectly united to God, finds everything in him, and cannot desire anything else. (*Life* Chapter 38)

10. This intimate, penetrating, gentle and gracious love that man feels in his heart, is not known nor can it be expressed or understood but with intelligence of affection, in which man feels occupied, bound, transformed, content, pacific and ordered in his corporeal senses without any contradiction; in such a way that he has nothing, he wants nothing, he desires nothing, and he remains in repose, peaceful and satisfied in the bottom of his heart without knowing anything else. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 6)

11. The memory is content being occupied by spiritual things, and cannot remember other things; but it knows neither the means nor the form of it. The Natural love which is in man, says that it has been seized and surrounded by another, supernatural Love, and that it cannot be occupied by anything else: but it remains satisfied and content; it wants and seeks no other food, and it believes it has all it could desire. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 14)

12. That sight gives great peace and extreme contentment to the soul: but this contentment does not however decrease the pain; and it could not suffer so much that it would want to leave this order of God in it: it does not leave prison, and does not try and does not desire to leave, until God does all that will be necessary for it. (Treaty on Purgatory Number 33 Cologne Edition)

#### ST. TERESA

13. This satisfaction is in the most intimate part of the soul; but it does not know through what or how it came to it, and often it does not even know what to do, or desire, or ask for: it seems that the soul finds everything together, and yet it does not know what it has found. (*Life* Chapter 14)

14. In this state he no longer wants to desire or have any other will than the one that Our Lord gives him; he begs him and consigns him the keeps to his. (*Life* Chapter 20)

15. What do I care about me, my Lord, and what concern do I have, if not of you? (Chapter 39)

16. There is no honor, nor life, nor good in the body or the soul, which stops me, and I, neither want nor desire my profit, but only his glory. I do not believe that the Devil has procured so many goods for me in order to lose after my loss. (Chapter 40)

17. As for the Wife, it seems to her that is nothing more to desire; but there is still much for our most sacred King to give. (*Conception of the Love of God* Chapter 6)

18. What amazes me more, is that, as you could see, although the trials and the afflictions that they suffer through the desire to die in order to enjoy Our Lord, have been such, nevertheless the will that at present they have to serve him, and to make them praise him, as if to still profit some soul, if they could, is so great, that not only do they no longer long to die, but even to live many years. (*Chastisement VII Dem.* Chapter 3)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

19. In this nakedness the spirit finds repose, because it desires nothing more. (Explanation of the Enigma)

20. It is not distressed by the desires of hope either; because being already content and satisfied in the divine union, according to the condition of the present life, it has nothing to hope for concerning the world nor anything to desire concerning the spiritual sphere, since it sees itself filled up with the riches of God; even though it can grow in charity: and so to living and to dying the soul is conformable and adjusted to the will of God. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 30)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

21. Rusbroche. Whoever loves God is content with him, and desires nothing else. (*On True Contemplation* Chapter 37 and *Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 1, Section 3)

22. Taulere. Pure love must not be sought in eternal goods, namely, must not long to enjoy great glory, great honor and reward for its good actions in heaven; perfect virtue and pure love do not allow one to desire or seek such things and other things like them only for the love of self: Love which is truly pure, leaves the rest as if it had not interest in them, whether God wants to give paradise, or whether he wants to damn or shame. (Sermon on the 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Trinity) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 1, Section 3)

23. St. Thomas. Charity reaches God himself, in order to fix itself in him; not so that from there something comes back to us. (2.2. Qu.23) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 7, Section 1)

24. St. Bernard. I do not want, says the Wife, your blessing, but yourself: [Psalms 72:25 (or 73:25 in the KJV)] what is there in heaven for me? And what do I want on earth besides you? (On Canticle 3) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 7, Section 1)

25. Rusbroche. God commands us to love him over ourselves and over all things without any regard for reward. For love is the reward, and is eternal life. We must therefore love without any return or reflection; for [O my Love, you know that it is thus!] to love in order to be loved, is a characteristic of nature and disordered love. – And this for us must be a certainly more agreeable and pleasant thing to believe, to hope for and to confide ourselves in him, than being

certain and assured of eternal life: for he commands us to love him eternally, but he does not command us to desire reward. – Those who are good and just cherish the will of God more than their own, and would prefer to be in Hell with the will of God, than to against this will reign in the heavens. (*On True Contemplation* Chapter 69 and *Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 7, Section 1)

26. Don Bartelemi of the Martyrs. They, who live perfectly, are not brought to God by vile or mercenary love, but by a filial love, saying: what is there for me in heaven, and outside of you that I wanted on earth. (*Abridgement* Part 1, Chapter 7) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 7, Section 1)

27. St. Bonaventure. See Virtue Number 15.

28. Albert the Great. See Pure Love Number 29.

29. St. Thomas. This is a perfection which one does not consider in accordance with the totality on the part of that which is admirable, nor in accordance with the totality on the part of him who loves, as for this, that he may always be just now brought to God, but as for this, that he excludes the things which repulse the movement of the direction of God, as St. Augustine says in Book 83 of the Questions, that covetousness is the spite venom of charity; perfection, not of desire. And this perfection can be obtained in this life. (In the last Part of the second Question 184, Article 2) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 14, Section 4)

30. Man can reach such a state, in which all things left behind, one persists in the sole contemplation of God. (Question 180, Article 6) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 14, Section 4)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

31. See Acts Number 11.

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

32. We do not mean, by this too great boiling of desires, to find fault with the holy desires which are in God according to their essence, or as long as they are well-ordered; but when badly ordered, or accompanied by some circumstance which hinders their fullness or full accomplishment and their deification through total entry, loss and death in God. [Acts Number 12] This hindrance is a too great boiling, namely active: I say active, to exclude the passive, which is gentle, profound and deiform, without sound or action; but on the contrary this active hindrance is impetuous, restless, superficial, which feels man, nature, natural and human operation too much. And these two desires are like two bodies of water, one of which is boiling and impetuous, which makes a lot of noise, and which however is not rough: the other gentle, without noise, calm, and yet very deep. Now even though this boiling of desires indeed seems good in beginners, it is nevertheless vicious in this state and must be cut off: [Admirable explanation] not that one must leave good desires, but the imperfection of these desires: not the one must quit them, but achieve them; not lose them, but purify and perfect them in God. As the seed is not lost in order to be cast into its place, but is changed and multiplied; as one sees with the grain of wheat, which is not lost in order to be thrown into the earth, but is changed and multiplied: in the same way the desires are not lost in order to be cast into God but are purified, multiplied and attained. And as the grain does not produce wheat, if it is not decomposed and deadened; so will the good desires never produce their results, namely union and transformation, if they are not cast into and accomplished in God. That is why Our Lord says: [John 12:24] If the grain of wheat does not fall to the ground and die, it remains but a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces fruit abundantly. And as at the beginning the grain is necessary, so at the end is its decomposition expedient to multiply the wheat; it is the same with the good desires and their annihilation in order to acquire the union of God. But as in such decomposition properly the grain is not said to be decomposed, but rather changed into wheat; so are these desires not properly annihilated, but rather changed and transformed in union. And however as this grain never comes back to itself, but remains always transformed or changed into wheat, as in its outcome, its final end and its perfection; so do the desires never come back, but remain transformed in union, as in their outcome and in the height of their perfection. But as one must not throw the grain everywhere at any time, but in its place and time; so must one not leave or annihilate these desires in any place, but only in God; nor in all exercises, but in the exercise of the union; nor at the beginning, but in its time, which is after the well practiced active life. [Acts Number 13] There one sees how those who think that they must always operate and produce fervent acts or aspiration are deceived: and still more those who value such a way to make the true union, and condemn the opposite as a bad thing, which puts the soul in vicious idleness; which is the opposite of the doctrine of St. Dennis cited above in the second Chapter; which is said again elsewhere: He cuts off all our intellectual operation in order to hurl us, when it is appropriate, into the sur-essential ray. All the Mystic Doctors say the same thing. But that will be spoken about in its place.

Now the soul having found this shortcoming and this hindrance in its path and in its union remedies it by an outflow of its fervors in God, not so that it does something, but so that it endures such operation in it. [Harphius. *Mystic Theology* Line 3, Part 4, Chapter 27]

This outflow of ardent desires in God is a change from practical love, to fruitful love; and is the final repose and the perfect accomplishment of the desires in God, where desire is absorbed and changed into possession. This word, outflow, contains two things, namely death and life; or loss and gain: because as long as fervor flows outside of the soul, it is lulled and dies, grows faint and is lost; but as long as it is lost in God it increases more and lives more than ever. That is why I do not say, annihilation, as if they were annihilated in God, but an outflow into God, as if preserved in him. Therefore I do not say a deprivation of desires, but, outflow, to show that they are no longer felt in the soul in order to be refined, and for the living and sweet operation of God in it, which changes [It is necessary that when the soul is transformed into God, everything is transformed with it.] the desires into the desired thing.

Now this change contains three things, namely a clear manifestation of the desired thing, a fulfilling of desire and a fading out of these desires. Concerning the first, this manifestation of the desired thing, which is God, does not come all at the same time, but little by little and by degrees, according to the growth of our love. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 5)

33. One must be on guard that in this state, it is imperfection to desire God as if he were absent. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 10, Number 9)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

34. Certainly our will can never die, no more than our own spirit; but it sometimes passes beyond the limits of its ordinary life, in order to live [Desire inevitably follows will. If our will passes into God, as St. Francis of Sales says, our desire also passes into him; for desire is inseparable from it. The will is like fire, and desire is its flame. Non-will and non-desire come from the same cause, which is death for us and life in God, which comes about through love and transformation of our will into God's.] wholly in divine will: it is then that it no longer knows how or wants to want anything, but it surrenders itself totally and without reserve to the good pleasure of divine providence, being mixed and soaked with this good pleasure so much that it no longer appears, but is totally hidden with Jesus Christ in God, where it lives, no longer itself, but the will of God lives in it.

What becomes of the clarity of the stars when the Sun appears on our horizon? It certainly does not perish; but it is ravished and engulfed in the sovereign light of the Sun, with which it is happily mixed and conjoined. And what becomes of human will when it is totally abandoned to divine good pleasure? It does not completely perish; but it is overwhelmed by and mixed with the will of God so much that it no longer appears, and has no more will separate from the will of God.

St. Francis continues with an admirable comparison of the voyage of St. Louis and the Queen: he concludes do you not intend to go also Madame? Not really I have no intention, except to be near the King, and the places where he goes are of no consideration to me and I am indifferent to them, except as far as he will be there; I go without any desire to go. – It is therefore the King who goes and who wants the voyage; and as for me, I do not go: if I follow, I do not want the trip, but only the presence of the King. (*On Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 13)

35. Thus, my dear Theotime, a will resigned into that of its God must not have any will, but simply follow God's. And as he who is on a ship, does not move by his own movement, but only lets himself be moved by the movement of the vessel he is in; in the same way the heart which has embarked into divine good pleasure, must not have any other will than that of letting itself be brought to the will of God. Then the heart no longer says: Your will be done and not mine: for it has no more will to renounce; but it says these words: Lord, I put my will in your hands; as if its will were no longer in its disposition, but in that of divine providence. Such that [Admirable difference between the submission of the will and the union of the will to God's.] it is not exactly like servants follow their masters: for although the trip is made by the will of the master; their following is still made by their own particular will, even though it is a following submissive will subject to their master's; if in this way the master and the servant are two, so are the will of the master and that of the servant are two.

[Annihilation Number 27] But the will which is dead to itself in order to live in God's, it is without any personal will, remaining not only conformable and subdued, but totally annihilated itself and converted into God's: as one would say about a small child who does not yet have the use of his will, to want or like nothing but the bosom and the face of his dear mother; for he does not in the least think about being on one side or the other, or about wanting whatever, except to be in the arms of his mother, with whom he thinks he is one same thing: and does not in the least worry about accommodating his will to his mother's: for he does not feel his own and does not think he has one, leaving to his mother the concern about going, doing, and wanting whatever she finds to be good for him. It is certainly the sovereign perfection of our will to be thus united to the will of our Sovereign Good, as was the will of the Saint who said: [Psalms 72:24 (or 73:24 in KJV)] O Lord, you guided and led me into your will: For what did he want to say, except that he had not in the slightest employed his will to guide himself, simply having let himself be guided and led to the will of his God? (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 13)

36. Let us not be entertained by wishing for or wanting things; but let us want and do to God for us, in the way that will please him.

No, Lord, I want no event; I let you want them for me, everything to your liking. (Book 9, Chapter 14)

37. See Abandon Number 22.

38. See Faults Number 12.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

39. See Loss Number 39.

40. This is why all these people long for so much and without perfect indifference, when that is with the best intention in the world, without doubt is an effect of haughtiness.

41. We remain there in very pure, very peaceful and very eternal love, if one must speak in this way. For there we are eternal, even above eternity, as long as we are totally lost, even to those feelings and sights, so little that they are distinct from the same Object, which engulfs and loses us more and more in him. From this comes that we are without any desire to leave there, in order to reflect on ourselves in any way, in order to see where and what we are. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 9)

42. Supreme and lost contemplation is the most vivid imitation of God on earth; and the truth is that men are not worthy of such people. Those who live in the region of their depths are very wonderfully here below. One must not speak to them about boundaries, nor about that which does not exist; but certainly about the most keen and excellent penetration of their own depths, and they will not be content, until they have penetrated this abyss without a bottom and without sides, where God is living in him alone and for him alone, and where the creature is so annihilated in God, that it does not long to nor would know how to either speak or listen to anything else. For while one longs for something, one is not essentially lost, (at least entirely) in the sur-essence in which there is no virtue, except exemplarily, no essence except sur-essentially, without perceptible distinction or difference. (*On The Effusiveness of Man Outside of God and His Refusion in God* Treatise 2, Number 14)

#### MONSIEUR OLIER

43. When the interior powers are occupied by the Husband and filled by divine operations, they are without desire to operate in themselves, and they are content and satisfied, because they find their natural fullness in him. (Letter 12)

#### FATHER SURIN

44. The third degree is of those who even surrendered their salvation and their eternity into the hands of God, -- they are moved to nothing only because they serve God with pure love for him. (*Foundation of Spiritual Life* Book 3, Chapter 4)

45. The route of the good and spiritual is to have no desires for anything distinct; but to be indifferent to everything, seeking only the will of God for his pure love; and although one did not feel actual love do it in the light of faith. Seeking what he prescribes, is the means of putting oneself at peace: seeking this divine will, one must first seek the union through conformity to the will of God; then enter into the experiencing of God through this satiating union where happiness is found. (*Foundation of Spiritual Life* Book 4, Chapter 4)

#### FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

gives an account of

46. Sister Marie Rosette (led by St. Francis of Sales): I feel and know although without reflection, that I want to perform for God, for his pure love, for his greatest glory, with all the purity, all the renouncement of self interest which is possible for me; but nevertheless I do not think about it, nor about wanting God: I am advised that as I leave to him to want and choose everything for me, retaining for myself neither will nor choice in either time or eternity, so must I leave to him the care for wanting himself for me. I therefore want nothing from the things of the earth, nor from those of heaven; it suffices for me that he wants them for me; and even if I could possess them and enjoy him eternally without any sweetness or satisfaction, which is impossible, I would be content with that. (Circular Letter on her death) (8<sup>th</sup> Mystic Conference)

47. My attraction and my instinct, if I have any or can know them, brings me sooner to see nothing, to do nothing, even to not watch if I can or if I must do something, but to walk like a blind man and lose myself in God so much, that I do



not even amuse myself in seeing that I am getting lost, and how I do, or even how God is losing me: Therefore I have my powers so bound that I cannot make use of them at any time to perform interior acts; and I am never in greater peace in my superior portion, and I am never better in my center than when I leave myself at the mercy of this attraction to do nothing and to try to do nothing for myself.

[Loss Number 57] I have been told that when a thing is lost, whoever lost it no longer sees it and no longer makes use of it: in the same way when the soul has absolutely surrendered and given itself to God, being engulfed in him without reserve, it is lost in God with all its powers; and it would not know how to make use of them unless it went forth from God to go back into itself. The soul is lost in God, so as to no longer be in itself and to no longer live in itself; but so as to be wholly in God, so that it is he who lives in it. It is therefore for God to live in the soul, to perform and to operate in it all that will please him.

My powers served for me as instruments to reach the union with my God; I then have no more need to use these powers to arrive at this union, since it is done, and my soul has been united with God for several years: [Not never: stability] Never do I feel myself drawn to say to him any words either about love or confidence, or abandon; or to desire the feelings to do so, or to desire to have them; if God gives them to me, I receive them, if not, I do not seek them, or think of asking him for anything either for me or for the others.

And when I am in drought I do not force myself to perform acts of submission in order to put myself in the disposition to suffer, or to do whatever. Finally it seems to me impossible to do anything, or desire anything, except that the good pleasure of God is eternally achieved in me and in all the creatures: I do not however think about desiring it; but that is my interior disposition. [Abandon Number 35] It has been advised for me that I feel no resistance or difficulty, at least in my will, in accepting and enduring all that God could want, even when it is the punishment of Hell for eternity; because when it is his good pleasure, I will commit no sin, and would not commit any, since his good pleasure cannot want sin, and is never the author of it.

Here then is all my achievement, to do nothing, and to not even desire to do anything: in such a way that not only is my desire to desire nothing, my will to want nothing, my inclination to not be inclined, my choice to not make any choice; but I do not even want to desire to desire nothing, because I am told that this would be a desire. I would like to not even think or look if I have the desire to have no desire, in order to be lost all the better, and to walk without these supports which are not God, removing all the obstacles which are between him and my soul, so that he can operate and communicate himself to it when he wants. (Circular Letter on her death) (Conference 19)

48. -- I try to stop nowhere, and to want neither honor nor scorn, neither joy nor sadness, neither sweetness nor drought, neither satisfaction nor desolation, neither mortification nor consolation, neither health nor sickness, neither death nor life, neither heaven nor hell, nor anything from all the remainder that can be desired in this world or in the other; all my attraction and interior instinct, if I have any or if I can know about it, brings me sooner to see nothing of all that and to do nothing at all. (Circular Letter on her death) (Conference 20)

## SECTION 16 GOD TEACHES THE SOUL.

It says in so many places in [my] writings, that God teaches the soul in an admirable manner.

### CANTICLE

The Soul would not know how to know the divine Object of its love, -- that it may also not know itself: since the nothingness of the Creatures is to know the All of God. But because it is this all of God that the light necessary to uncover the abyss of the nothingness of the creature can exist, he orders it to go forth. And from where? From itself. -- And to go where? In order to enter into God. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

Then the soul must even lose the perceived sight of discernment where there is no more division or distinction; but a perfect blending: so that the creature could not look at God (that is to say objectively) in this state, without seeing itself, and at the same time perceive the operations of its Love. Now then all that must be hidden and concealed from its view, and like a Seraph [Seraphs are depicted with six wings; two cover the eyes, two the feet, and the ones of the heart remain open.] it must have veiled eyes, so as to never again see anything in this life. Which is meant by wanting to see nothing and seeking no discovery by itself, which it cannot do without infidelity: But that does not prevent God from uncovering for it and making it understand all things when it pleases him. There is only the heart, which remains uncovered, because it cannot love too much. (Chapter 5, Verse 4)

O the admirable learning of the soul, which is taught with little sound in the ineffable and forever eloquent silence of Divinity! The Word speaks constantly to this soul, and teaches it in a manner, which shames the greatest Doctors. But to the point that it teaches the soul, by insinuating itself more and more in it, and constantly enlarging its passive capacity; so does this faithful soul make its Husband drink its wine mixed with the sweetness and gentle sourness of its pomegranates, which is what produces love in it continually returning to him all that he gave it with an entire purity. (Chapter 8, Verse 2)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. The Divinity is above all which is essence and life, and there is no light, which can show it. Every word and every spirit is incomparably below its excellence. (*On Heavenly Hierarchy* Chapter 2)

2. We ascend by order and through that path toward he who is beyond all things as long as our strength allows it, by removing all which is in front of him, and attributing to him that same thing that we remove, saying that it is in him in a sur-eminent way, like he who is the cause of all things. And yet God is known in all things, and also without them: he is known by knowledge and by ignorance. -- [Departure from Self Number 8] That knowledge that one has of God is truly divine, which is known by ignorance, by the means of a certain union which is above the understanding, when the spirit withdrawing itself from all things, and then still surrendering itself, is united to the more than most luminous and most clear rays, and from these rays and inside of them it is illustrated in the abyss and in the depth of divine Sapience (knowledge). (*On Divine Names* Chapter 7)

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. Happy is he that the Truth teaches, not by symbols and words, but by itself and according to what it is. (Book 3, Section 1)

4. See Hearing Number 4.

5. The more a man is collected in himself, and has become simple in the bottom of his heart, the more he will advance without pain in the knowledge of things, and will understand more elevated things; because he will be receiving the gift of intelligence from on high. -- The humble knowledge of oneself is a certainly more secure path for going to God than profound learning (science). (Book 3, Sections 3-4)

6. There is a very large difference between the wisdom of a man that God himself instructs through the unction of his Spirit, and the human learning of a very capable Theologian. This light, which comes from heaven and that God, diffuses in the soul through the gift and influence of his grace is without comparison nobler and more excellent than that which is acquired by the work and efforts of the human spirit (mind). (Book 3, Chapter 31, Section 2)

## THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

7. It seems to the soul that what it knew before, indeed even all that everybody knows, in comparison with this Savior, is pure ignorance; and this deification with which it remains – does not allow it to attend to anything of the world. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

8. The savory learning [Savory learning, wisdom; I believe that this is what is said in I John 2:27 – **Unction will teach you all truth; for this divine unction does not let one ignore anything about divine matters although one may be ignorant about others and about oneself.**] that is says that it teaches it, is Mystic Theology, which is a secret science (skill) from God, that spiritual name Contemplation, which is very savory, because it is learning through the path of love, which is the master of it, and that which makes everything savory; and all the more because God communicates to it this learning and intelligence in the love with which he communicates himself to the soul, it is savory for him for the understanding, since it is a learning which belongs to it and it is savory to the will, since it is in love, which belongs to the will. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 19)

9. Let us go to the mountain or to the hill. That is to say, the knowledge like that the Theologians call morning, which is a knowledge in the divine Word, which is meant by the word mountain, because the Word is the most high essential Wisdom of God: or let us go on to the knowledge of the evening, which is the Wisdom of God in his creatures, in his works and in his admirable arrangements, Wisdom is signified by the hill, which is lower than the mountain. When the soul then says: Let us go see the mountain in your beauty, which is to say, make me like and inform me about the beauty of divine Wisdom which is, as we say; the Son of God: And saying, or let us go to the hill, it so ask that he inform it about his Wisdom and his mysteries in his creatures and in his works, which is also, a beauty which the soul desires to see itself illustrated with. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 36)

10. This night is Contemplation, because contemplation is obscure; that is why it is also called Mystic Theology, which means hidden and secret Wisdom of God, in which without sound of any words and without the help of any of the senses, like in the silence and quietness of the night, and above all the senses, God very secretly teaches the soul, without it knowing how: which is called to understand, not understanding, because active understanding does not do that, which operates in the forms and ghosts of things; but that comes about in the understanding so long as it is liable and passive, which does not receive any forms or ghosts, but passively receives substantial intelligence which is given to it without any appropriate industry. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 39)

## BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

11. Contemplation in this degree is a science without science (learning) and which knows no means; which is seen and possessed without admiration, whose return is admiration. (*Mirror and Flames of Divine Love* Chapter 7)

12. Very devote ignorance suits us well, o my Love, since we are infinitely in love over love totally in you, happily transformed into you. On this subject we abhor natural learning, which is the bread only of purely moral men. I say infinitely more than we even want about the science (learning) of intimate love. And yet this same love knows that the less we desire and think of it, the more we have it excellently above all which is inferior to us in the state of love. If it could come about, o my dear life, that the single word of love might suffice for us, in order to understand and express what we believe ourselves to have overlooked, even when we direct it for us; this would be an indescribable pleasure for us. But as that itself is only a form (although very expressive and delicious) only a departure, and only produces that you yourself make in us and for us; this displayed production is nothing to us in comparison with you. (Contemplation Number 1)

13. Natural infused Sapience (Knowledge) is sufficient alone to make man blessed within nature, in the way that the Wise man [Wisdom 8:5-8 – “**If riches be a possession to be desired in this life; what is richer than wisdom, that worketh all things? And if prudence work; who of all that are is a more cunning workman than she? And if a man loves righteousness, her labours are virtues: for she teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude: which are such things, as men can have nothing more profitable in their life. If a man desires much experience, she knoweth things of old, and conjectureth aright what is to come: she knoweth the subtleties of speeches, and can expound dark sentences: she foreseeeth signs and wonders, and the events of seasons and times.**”] and all Scripture with the Fathers of the Church are faith for us, and even with them the wise Philosophers of antiquity. This knowledge through it habit, through its learning, and through its savory light, performs a continual act, whose effect is a perfect rectitude of the soul and of the body in the very narrow moral honesty. – In which certainly the lover of Knowledge is so content in this life that it is as

removed from desiring something with it, as heaven is removed from earth, because it is very fully sufficient for its oneness.

For a much stronger reason divine Knowledge fills the soul and the heart with its Lover's indescribable delights: and certainly at this time the Deity and his Paradise have flowed out into the earth and into the flesh, which means that this is made of spirit and deified by God if the divine infusions have been great and deep; so that whoever is ravished by God in his sight and in his contemplation [Tastes of eternal beatitude. Paradise on earth.] in his possible manner tastes something of the future and eternal beatitude, whose habits are so noble that it is almost impossible, as I said, for him to here after take delight in the creatures. (*On Simplicity* Treatise 3, Number 10)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

14. Prayer, in the way that the Holy Fathers say it, is an elevation of the soul into God, a familiar and reciprocal interview between the creature (created being) and its Creator, who uncovers his secrets for it, and reveals his mysteries to it, to make himself loved by it in making himself known: but he gives this grace only to those who are small in their own eyes, and who remain humbled before him through the knowledge of their nothingness, by the arousal of their weaknesses and by the feeling of their miseries and their unworthiness. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Section 10)

## SECTION 17 DISTRACTIONS. TEMPTATIONS

One must bring them together; because it is the same manner of fighting against both, and I have little to say of Temptations, because it is spoken about very much in the article on the Purification and Trials.

### SHORT METHOD

As the direct and principle exercise must be the sight of the presence of God: what one must also do most faithfully is to call back one's senses when they dissipated.

This is a short and effective manner for fighting distractions: because those who want to be directly opposed, irritate and augment them; whereas by sinking into God through the sight of faith, and simply collecting oneself, and without thinking about it; but in a very effective manner. (Chapter 2, Number 4)

In distractions or temptations, instead of fighting them directly, (which would only increase them, and pull the soul from its adherence to God, who must perform totally his occupation,) one must simply always turn one's view and near God more and more; like a small child, who seeing a monster does not assume himself in fighting it, or even in looking at it, but sinks gently into the bosom of his mother, where he finds himself safe. [Psalms 46:5 KJV] God is in the mists of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

Doing otherwise, as we are weak, thinking of attacking our enemies, we find ourselves often injured, if we do not find ourselves entirely undone: But remaining in the simple presence of God, we find ourselves of a sudden fortified. That was the conduct of David [Psalms 15:8-9 (or 16:8-9 KJV)] I, he says always have the Lord present before me, and I will not be shaken: it is for this that my heart is joyous, and that even my flesh will rest in assurance. It is said in Exodus 14:14, The Lord will fight for you, and you will keep yourself in repose. (Chapter 19)

### AUTHORITIES

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. You will surmount temptations little by little through patient and a humble wait for the help of God, more easily then by human eagerness accompanied by chagrin and with bad temper toward yourself. (Book 1, Chapter 13, Section 4)
2. The principle of all evil temptations is inconsistency of the soul and little confidence in God. (Book 1, Chapter 13, Section 5)
3. Help me my God, and however pressed I am by temptation, I will not fear falling. What can I do in this state? Lord, that your will may be done. I certainly deserved to be afflicted and overpowered. I deserve only to suffer; and pleased be your goodness that this may be with humble patience, by waiting for the storm to pass and the calm to follow. Your hand which can do everything is powerful enough to pull me from this temptation and pacify its fierceness, so that I do not entirely succumb to it; since this is a favor that you already did for me so many times, o my God and my mercy. The more I find myself in the impotence of leaving this evil, the more the hand of the Most-High will distinguish himself by pulling me from it with a totally powerful facility. (Book 3, Chapter 29, Sections 1-2)
4. See Joy of the Soul Number 5.

#### ST. TERESA

5. As for evil thoughts, that he may not take them into account, that he may consider that the Devil also showed them to St. Jerome in the desert: I know that these toils have their reward, as one who has endured them for several years. — As for me I believe that his Majesty often wants to give these torments at the beginning and at the end, and also allows one to be wrought by several temptations, in order to test those who love him, and to know if they will be able to drink from the chalice and help him to carry his cross, before communicating the great treasures to them. (*Life* Chapter 11)
6. Now know, my daughters, I claim as certain that those who reach perfection, do not ask from Our Lord to be delivered from toils, temptations and combat; for this is another very secure and very special effect, that this is the Spirit of God, and not an illusion hidden in contemplation and in the graces that they receive: because on the contrary they desire them, ask for them and cherish them: They resemble soldiers who are more content where there is more war, hoping to have greater booty: if there is none, they do without their salary; but they see that they cannot make a great profit in this state. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 38)

7. Do not fear, my Sisters, to go through these paths: for there are several in Prayer: the path is secure and will be delivered from temptations being near Our Lord, sooner than be being distanced from him. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 39)

8. The devil [Satan is greatly envious of the soul which is praying, and makes use of any means, in order to divert it from its repose.] will fill you with a thousand false fears in order to trouble your soul, so that it does not enjoy these great goods, and will make others give you some. Do you think that it is hardly important for him to intimidate you in this way? I tell you that it is hardly important for him to intimidate you in this way? I tell you that it is very important for him, because he brings about two kinds of damage through this; one that he frightens those who listen to him, and makes them not venture to approach Prayer, thinking that they will fall thus into the same abuses; the other is that without that there would be many more who would approach God, seeing that he is good, and that it is possible for him to communicate himself so intimately to sinners. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 40)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

9. It happens several times to these beginners that in spiritual exercises (without it being in their power to protect themselves from it) it raises up and they feel dirty movements, and sometimes when the spirit is well collected in prayer, or even when they are receiving Holy Communion, and confessing: which without them having the power to prevent it, like I just said, proceeds from one of these three causes.

The second reason from which these rebellious sometimes proceed, is the Devil, who in order to worry and trouble the soul when it is in prayer, or ready to pray, tries to make these dirty movements in nature, which are very detrimental to the soul if it is anxious about them; because not only for the great fear of such a thing does he make it relinquish prayer, which is what he was endeavoring to do, in order to enter into combat with them: but he makes some of them to quit it completely, considering that this will happen to them more in this state than elsewhere, which is true: for the Devil saves them more for this time in order to make abandon the spiritual exercises. And not only that; but he comes to eagerly present filth to them, and sometimes in connection with all sorts of spiritual things, and to people who profit in their souls, to dismay and lay them low in everything: in such a manner that those who make a case of that, do not dare to see or consider anything because they immediately falter in this or that; which happens especially to the melancholy, with so much effectiveness and vehemence that one has reason to have compassion for them: -- they are not in the least cured of it, -- if it is only the dark night which enters into the soul which purifies it of everything.

The third source from where these movements have the custom of proceeding and making war, is the fear that they have imagined of these movements and dishonest representations: all the more because the fear, that prompt memories give them of what they see or do, or what they think makes them endure these acts without it being their fault.

Some among them under the color and pretext of Spirituality conceive fondness toward other people, which usually proceeds from lust and not the spirit; which is recognized as being of this kind, [This is the difference between souls which are truly with God and those which are with the others, that their approach makes the temptations fall away, collects them and brings them to God; simply by memory they are put in prayer: and the others who on contrary have a corrupted heart and body, arouse only wicked desires. This is a very sure sign.] when through the remembrance of this fondness the memory and love of God does not grow, but rather the remorse of the conscience; for when affection is purely spiritual, is proportion to how it grows, God's affection also grows: and all the more they remember it, all the more do they remember God's and have a desire for him. For that this property, that it makes good grow with good, because of the likeness and conformity that they have. But when this affection is born from the aforementioned sensual vice, it has wholly opposite effects; because the more that the one grows, the more the other shrinks. And the same way with remembrance: For if this love grows, he will see himself grow cold to God's love and will neglect him, because of the remembrance of the person that he loves; and moreover he will feel remorse in his conscience: on the contrary if the love of God grows in the soul, he grows cold in the other and neglects it. For as these are opposing loves, it takes so much for one to help the other, that instead the one, which predominates, extinguishes and dims the other, and reinforces itself. That is why Our Lord says in the Gospels; [John 3:6] that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. That is to say that the love [This remark is very necessary in order to make the truth known.] which comes from sensuality remains in sensuality, and that which comes from the spirit is fixed in the Spirit of God and makes it grow. Here is the difference between the two loves in order to discern between and know them. (*Dark Night of the Soul* Book 1, Chapter 4)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

10. St. Gregory: It happens often that the spirit raises the soul to the most sublime and elevated things, and that nevertheless the flesh attacks it with troublesome temptations; and when the spirit is led to contemplation of heavenly things, it is pushed back by the images that are presented to it by an illicit action, because the sting of the flesh injures

unexpectedly whatever holy contemplation was ravishing outside the flesh. Then heaven and hell are confined together, when the same spirit is elevated and illuminated by contemplation, and is dimmed by the importunity of temptations, so that by raising itself it sees and so that it desires, and so that by being raised by such thoughts, it learns patience and tolerates what it is ashamed of: for the light derives from heaven, and hell is covered in darkness: therefore heaven and hell are reduced to one, when the spirit which already values the light of the heavenly country, thus carries with the war of the flesh the darkness of hidden temptations. (Book 10 on Morals Chapter 8) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 3)

11. St. Jerome. Very often in my prayer I take a walk through the porches and arcade, where I am occupied in making accounts of profit and gain, or brought to dishonest thought, I suffer things, which are shameful to tell. (*Dialogue against the Luciferians*) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 3)

12. St. Diadoche. One sees that the soul may in the same instant think of both honest and dishonest things; like the man whose example we showed, is cold and warm at the same time: for all the more because our souls has fallen into a double knowledge, [that of the good and of the evil] it must in the same moment, though in spite of itself, bear both honest and dirty thoughts, particularly those who achieve the subtleness of discerning; for the soul hastening to consider something honest, the memory of evil immediately comes to it. (*On Spiritual Perfection* Chapter 88) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 3)

13. Blossius speaking about St. Bridget and St. Catherine of Sienna: They have suffered several dishonest movements and thoughts, even at times of Communion and spiritual exercises, from which they receive much pain [This is the difference between souls truly of God (and false spirituals): they suffer their temptations with extreme pain, endeavoring to not look at them, but applying themselves directly to God, which first makes them fall away: where as the others plunge in, delight in them, quit the sight of God and willingly turn themselves away completely, so as to take delight in their sensuality, and leave prayer where they have now, for fear that the memory of the God of purity may pull them from their impurity.] and displeasure; and consequently that was not imputed to them with guilt or fault, but rather gave them merit. That is why Our Lord said to the doleful and afflicted St. Catherine, what are you distressed about, if that causes you pain I am there: and Paladius reports that about himself. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 3)

14. Father John of Jesus-Maria: It is a constant thing among Doctors, that each time that something dishonest happens against intention, coming from something necessary or appropriate for the body, such as moderated drink and food, or to the soul such as praying, studying &c there is no guilt in not desisting from that occupation. [If there is no guilt in not desisting from what one is doing, with how much greater reason is there no disadvantage in turning oneself away from these thoughts with a stranger application to God. O if I could make it understood how that is the sole remedy, and how they fall away from themselves through this occupation of the presence of God! You know, my Lord that I am telling the truth: but because this truth flows through such a contemptible canal, it will not be believed.] (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 3)

15. Again St. Gregory: Whoever is most ravished in contemplation, is most wrought by temptation; as often happens to those who profit well, that when their spirit is touched by compunction or ravished by contemplation above oneself, it is also pursued and followed unrestricted by temptation, for fear that it may be swelled and made proud by the things it is robbed of: For through compunction or contemplation it is raised to God; but by the weight of its temptation it is pushed back toward itself; so long as temptation weighs it down, so that contemplation does not advance. (Book 2 on Ezekiel Homily 14) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

16. As it is said [Job 30:12] there was nobody who gave help: if it is only that all powerful God sometimes leaves for while those that he loves forever: for God helps his Saints, by visiting them; tests them, by withdrawing from them; confirms them by gifts; tempts them with tribulations: which makes one say that the Wiseman [Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 (KJV)] spoke well; he chose it specially, he will attract to him fear and ordeal, and will torment him in the tribulation of his doctrine until he has tempted him in his thoughts. (*Moral* Book 20, Chapter 19) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

17. The first of these subtle and unknown imperfections in this suressential life is to contest or fight superfluous thoughts and distractions: and the reason is, because by such contesting the thoughts are imprinted more strongly in the spirit. For as the will which loves or hates a thing, awakens the intellect in order to understand the thing and memory in order to remember it; it follows that the more the will hates and is moved against its own thoughts, the more they will be understood by understanding and remembered by memory, and more imparted in the spirit: Here is why one should not

be moved by the challenging thoughts and distractions. Another reason is that the more one protests, the more movement and action there is in the soul; and thus the more one is distanced, according to our rule, from this death and annihilation; since the more one does, the more one is.

The remedy for this imperfection and this protest is its opposite, namely, scorn for such thoughts and distractions, and the annihilation of oneself in this abyss of light and life; where being annihilated, consequently thoughts will fade away. For the same abyss, which annihilates the person, also sinks distractions. And one must not make any difference between the feeling and the non-feeling of these thoughts, but one must keep oneself always firm and assured in one's nothing, and leave off fighting one's All; namely, this essential will, or one's God. And this sort of conduct (I do not say combat) must be seen in this life as sureminent against all temptations. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 10, Number 1)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

18. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 48.

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

19. The will which is its pleasant and savory quietude is tormented by the inferior part, must take care to not acquiesce or adhere to thus troubled senses, but scorning them it must nourish it repose and quietude as much as it can. There are souls who are strongly afflicted when their inferior part crosses the gentle repose of their will. St. Teresa was one of them. Sometimes, she said [*Way of Perfection* Chapter 31] I longed to die especially since I cannot are these inconsistency of thoughts. But one must not adhere to this inferior part which is senseless; because that prevents the soul from preserving and fortifying the quietude which resides in the will, there being nothing making it lose the taste that one feels in this quietude, sooner than fixing oneself on the foolish thoughts which throw it into at such times. That is why the same Saint in the cited place gives a good bit of advice. The will, she says, seeing itself in this quietude, must not worry about understanding, or thought, or imagining, for I do not know which one it is, other then it being foolish; because it wants to drag it along, it must be hindered or worried or troubled by some thing; and in this degree of prayer it will have nothing but work from it without gaining any advantage, but rather the Will shall lose what Our Lord gave it without any pain on its part.

That is why the first advice that I give is to scorn the whims of our senses. First of all because as St. Teresa says, the senses are foolish. A Mystic Theologian gives another reason: One must neglect it, he says [Barbancon: *Secret Paths* Book 2, Chapter 15] as one who has no connection or relation with the taste, which the will through a different path then it enjoys with God. I go further and give a third reason, that not only do the senses have no connection or alliance with the enjoyment and the repose of the will, but they are diametrically (absolutely) opposed to it and like a sworn enemy; and consequently that the will should not have a high opinion of them. Fourthly, there is nothing which chills them more, nor which blunts more the sharp tip of their weapons than this scorn. Fifthly, this scorn is the general remedy that the Masters of spiritual life advise, for this and for all other things. St. Teresa says (in general places) so speaking about this prayer. And therefore this agitation and torment of the inferior part do not remove from us the taste and repose of the quietude of the will, what are we worrying about? That they may remain as long as they like: it is sufficient that we are assured that God leaves them for us in order to exercise our patience.

The second piece of advice that I give to the soul, is to not strive more than is reasonable, to bring back the senses to their duty; because the effort that it makes to appease them and attract them to its liking, can only be detrimental to it in such a state of several reasons: First, because it is useless, the senses do not obey reason. Secondly seeing its useless efforts, it will be distressed, believing that the fury of this inferior sphere is a hindrance to enjoying its gentle repose, and that this disarray is a great evil; and this distress is very contrary to the prayer of repose, and sadness to its liking. The third reason is that working its spirit in order to calm the revolts of the inferior sphere, the will embraces more work than it can digest. The concern for calming one's senses is only capable of engulfing all one's attention; that of maintaining the taste of God does not ask for any less: having two spindles to disentangle so difficult that it can hardly satisfy one, how could it do it to both? And so it will fall overwhelmed under the load, as St. Teresa noticed above. The fourth reason is, that the arduous and useless task the soul takes on to calm the troubled senses, makes it lose the taste of its savory repose; because the attention that it gives to the senses, diminishes what it owns to the upkeep of this taste; and the lack of attention and cooperation with such graces decreases them, or makes them fade away completely. It will lose, says St. Teresa, what the Lord gives it without any of its own work; and will be forced to let go of the milk of the mouth and to lose this divine food. – And in the Castle of the soul, giving the reason for which the inferior sphere torments thus and crosses the quietude of the will, it is because, it says, the understanding cannot understand what the will wants and loves; by the understanding this Saint means the imagination, for it confuses these two things. What it confirms on the other hand, by saying [Dem. IV Chapter 3]; the understanding is ashamed to see that it does not understand what the soul wants, and so it goes about as if thoughtless and totally amazed; for it does not sit or take a rest in anything. The will is so plunged into God that the distress of the understanding gives it great pain; and consequently the will must not give much value to that, for it would make it lose much of what it is enjoying: but the will must leave it alone and surrender itself into the arms of love: for his Majesty will teach it what it must do during a time like this; and the all almost lies helpless thinking itself unworthy of such a great good, and employing itself in acts of grace. It



happens sometimes that someone wanting to prevent another from sinking sinks with him and loses the life that he wants to save him with: thus the soul wanting to draw the senses to tranquility and repose sinks with them in the waters of its worries, losing the grace of its precious repose. (Book 4, Treatise 7, Chapter 6, Section 6)

20. If thought or understanding flow into irrelevant things, one must make fun of them as if they were senseless, and keep oneself in one's repose and quietude, because they will come and go: and because the will is mistress here, it will bring them back without the soul preventing it.

Secondly because the senses will calm themselves; for they cannot forever continue their revolt against their queen. When the doves take the effort, if the mistress bee, who is their queen, does not go out with them, they will soon return; for they cannot live without her: thus will be our senses when they lose themselves in a thousand different distractions and fantasies, if the will keeps itself in its quietude, savoring the sweet honey of this hive; these importunate flies will pursue their mistress without whom they cannot remain in repose. For there is such a sympathy of these powers with the will, which is their queen and their mother, that even though for awhile they unbind themselves from its house and obedience; nevertheless if it pretends to not care about them, they will return to their house like the prodigal child; remembering that when they were in accordance with reason their mother, they enjoyed great peace and great pleasure. (Book 4, Treatise 7, Chapter 6, Section 7)

21. The first profit that the will could draw from the disorder of the senses, would be, an unconquerable force to preserve its peace against the efforts of its enemies and to prevent them from altering its taste. —

This prayer tormented by the inferior sphere is more deserving for the soul and more precious before God, than the prayer, which is exempt of torment.

When the soul has its passions moved, and when notwithstanding it goes back into itself with a gentle repose and a taste without worry, it learns to keep itself in repose each time it has its senses aroused; and it is severed from this sweet milk; because when it is in barrenness without any taste, it must introvert tranquilly and gently, without concerning itself with its passions or imagination, in the way that it does when God gives it repose and a pleasant taste; which is not a small profit. (Book 4, Treatise 7, Chapter 6, Section 8)

SECTION 18  
HEARING (UNDERSTANDING). INTELLIGENCE. WORDS. GOD SPEAKS TO THE SOUL.

These two verbs speaking and hearing (understanding) could not be separated.

SHORT METHOD

The reason, for which interior silence is so necessary, is that the Word being eternal and essential, one must have, so that the Word may be received in the soul, a disposition, which has some relation to what the Word is.

Now then, it is certain that in order to receive the word one must ready the ear and [All this does not mean to listen externally; but by simple attention to God through means of interior silence.] listen. The faculty of hearing is the sense, which is made to receive the Word when it is communicated. Hearing is a sense more passive than active, which receives and does not communicate. The Word being that which must be communicated to the soul and impart new life to it (revivify), it must be attentive to this same Word, which wants to speak to it on the inside.

This is why there are so many passages, which exhort us to listen to God, and to be attentive to his voice. [Isaiah 51:4, 46:3] Listen to me all you who are my people: nation that I chose. Listen to me all you whom I carry in my bosom, and whom I enclose in my guts. [Psalms 44:10-12 (45:10-12 KJV)] Listen, my daughter, see and ready your ear: forget the house of your father, and the King will form a love for your beauty. One must listen to God, make oneself attentive to him, neglect oneself, and all self interest: these two single actions (or rather passions; for that is very passive,) attract the love of beauty that he himself communicates.

Exterior silence is very necessary in order to cultivate interior silence; and it is impossible to become interior without loving silence and retreat. God tells us this through the mouth of his Prophet: [Hosea 2:14] I will lead her into solitude and there I will speak to her heart.

The means to be occupied by God interiorly, and occupy oneself exteriorly with a thousand trifles? That is impossible. (Chapter 14, Numbers 1-3)

O if one knew the happiness there is in listening to God in this way, and how much the soul is strengthened by it. [Zechariah 2:13] All flesh must be silent in the presence of the Lord. (Chapter 21, Number 11)

CANTICLE

This soul, which is asleep for all the rest, is more attentive to the voice of its Beloved: it understands (hears) and distinguishes him right away: here is the voice of my Beloved, it says; I know him, I understand (hear) him, and the results that he brings about in me do not allow me to doubt it. (Chapter 2, Verse 8)

The voice of my humanity invites you to come lose and hide yourself with it in the womb of my Father: You will hear this voice better when you are in the place where I call you, which you are not doing at present, it being yet unknown to you. This voice of my simplicity and my innocence, with which I want to gratify you, is certainly different from yours. (Chapter 2, Verse 12)

I wrote in many passages that one has difficulty in making oneself heard (understood). All this is included in the phrases Hearing (Understanding).

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. See Naked Faith Number 4.

2. (Speaking about the first divine cause.) Yet again in ascending we say that it has neither soul nor understand that it has neither imagination nor opinion, nor reason, nor intelligence; that it is also neither word, nor thought, and that it is neither stated nor understood. –

It is none of the things which have neither being nor any of those which have being: and none of the things which have being know it in the way that it is: therefore it does not know the things where are, in the way that they are. There is no word, no name, no learning of it: it is neither light, nor darkness, nor truth. (Mystic Theology Chapter 5)

3. The mystery of Jesus Christ is hidden and has not been divulged by any spoken word, nor revealed to any understanding, as it is in self: but although it is said and uttered, it nevertheless remains unexplainable by words, and even when it is thought and understood it remains unknown and not understood. (Epistle 3)

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

4. Whoever listens to the eternal Word is not caught in useless questions. Everything has been done by this single Word, this sovereign principle which speaks to our hearts. Without it no one can certainly understand the matters, or soundly judge them. Whoever finds everything in the sovereign unity, relates everything to this unity, and sees everything in this unity, will preserve his heart in peace in the womb of God. O Truth, which is my God, makes me one same thing with you by binding me to you through eternal charity. I am often bored (troubled), reading and listening so much; it is in you alone that I find all that I seek and desire. That all the Doctors may be silenced, that all the creatures may remain in silence before you; you alone may speak to me. (Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 2)

5. I will listen to what the Lord says to my heart. Happy is the soul which listens to God who speaks to it, and which receives from his mouth the word, which consoles it! Happy is the ear which hears the sacred sounds of this divine language, and which is made deaf to the noises and commotion of the world! Happy once again is the ear, which does not hear one word, which resonates on the outside, but which hears the truth itself, which teaches it divinely and in the bottom of the heart. (Book 3, Chapter 1, Section 1)

6. Speak Lord, for your servant is listening to you. I am your servant give me intelligence, so that I may learn what you command for me. Make my heart submissive to the words of your mouth; and make them penetrate into my soul like a heavenly dewdrop. The Israelites once said to Moses: [Exodus 20:19] Speak to us and we will listen to you: but do not let God speak to us lest we die. That is not the prayer that I make to you; no, my God, I do not make this prayer to you: but I ask with a humble desire for the same grace that the Prophet Samuel asked from you when he said to you; [1 Samuel 3:10] Speak Lord, for your servant is listening to you. May neither Moses nor any of the Prophets not speak to me; but speak to me yourself, my Lord and my God, who has been the oracle and light of all the Prophets: for you alone without them can teach me perfectly; and them without you will be of no use to me.

They can certainly make their words understood but they cannot give grace and spirit. What they say is admirable; but the heart is not touched by this if you yourself are not speaking. —

Speak to me for your servant is listening to you, and may your words [John 6:69] give eternal life. (Book 3, Chapter 2, Sections 1-3)

7. My son, listen to my words full of heavenly sweetness, and which infinitely pass the presumption learning of all the worldly Sages. My words [John 6:63] are spirit and life, and they must not be contemplated by the human senses. You should not listen to them in order to take vain self-satisfaction in them; but you must receive them in silence with deep humility and affection full of ardor. (Book 3, Chapter 3, Section 1)

8. I am the Sovereign Truth; I will teach you what is just and what pleases me. (Book 3, Chapter 4, Section 3)

9. It is I who teaches without the sound of words. (Book 3, Chapter 43, Section 3)

#### HARPHIUS

10. When through love we pass beyond all things, dying to all thought, we enter into a certain ignorance and obscurity: there we are moved and dressed in the eternal Word, which is the image of the Father; and in the inaction of our spirit we receive an incomprehensible clarity; - it is a view without boundaries; at last we become what we see in a light which transforms us into God. (Mystic Theology Book 3, Part 1, Chapter 2)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

11. A humbled understanding sees, hears, tastes and feels this secret, and soon arrives at the divine union. (*Life* Chapter 31)

12. The tongue can speak about it in some way but not about everything; for understanding is greater in capacity than is the faculty of expressing oneself with the tongue. But for the great abundance of this intelligence, and for the great feeling that God pours into the soul, the tongue cannot keep quiet; and yet it cannot say what it would like to: and those who are not deprived of their bad habits, nor illuminated from on high, cannot understand what this tongue then says; because if the understanding does not have the light of grace, it understands these things only vaguely without taste and without feeling. (Chapter 32)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

13. Since God is not understood in any distinct form or understanding; neither in order to be united to God must the soul fall under any distinct form or understanding. Now that in God there is no form or likeness, the Holy Spirit makes it understood enough saying: [Deuteronomy 4:12, 15] You heard the voice of his words, and you have seen no form. —

You saw no form the day that the Lord spoke amidst the fire on Mt. Horeb. – [Numbers 12:6-8] If there is a Prophet among you, I will appear to him in visions, where I will speak to him in dreams: But there is no one like my servant Moses, who is the most faithful in all my house: for I speak to him face to face; and he does not see God through riddles and figures, but plainly. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 16)

14. The principle reason why the requests that were made to God in ancient law, were allowed, and that it was fitting for the Priests and Prophets to ask for visions and revelations from God, is that then faith was not yet founded, nor Evangelical law yet established; and consequently they needed God to speak to them sometimes through words sometimes through visions, at times through revelations, at others in symbols. – Because all, that he answered, said and revealed, were mysteries of our faith, or things concerning or addressed to it. – But now that faith is founded in Jesus Christ, and the Evangelical law is manifested in this state of grace, one need no longer inquire, nor want God to respond as before. For by giving us his Son who is his Word and his only Word, he told and revealed to us [For the true Revelation of Jesus Christ see Ecstasy Numbers 11-13] all things at one single time through this single word. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 22)

15. Concerning these [substantial] words the soul has nothing to do or want none as for self, but to hold itself in resignation and humility giving its free consent to God: it has nothing to reject or fear: it only needs to work to perform what they say, because with these substantial words God operates in it and with it; which is desirous in the formal and successive causes: it has nothing to reject, because their effect remains substantiated in the soul and filled with the goods of God, which as the soul receives it passively, its action is less in everything: it must not fear deceit [The less there is action on our part, the less deceit there is.] because neither the understanding nor the Devil can intervene in that. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 31)

16. These second interior feelings are most high, most eminent and most useful, about which neither the soul nor whoever governs it can know, or understand the cause from which they proceed, nor what are the good works for which God gives it these favors, all the more because they do not depend on works that the soul does or thoughts that the soul has, although these things are of a good disposition for that. God gives them to whomever and for whatever reasons it pleases him to do so. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 32)

17. See Naked Faith Number 17.

18. As the wisdom of this contemplation is the language of God to the soul of a pure spirit, which the senses are not, they cannot understand it, and so that is hidden to them and they do not know it and cannot say it. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 17)

19. For here their too vile tongues  
stammer and I don't know what,  
which kills me and puts me outside of myself.

That is as if the soul said; but besides the cut that I receive from these creatures in the account that they give me of the multitude of your graces, there is such I-don't-know-what (an indefinable something), that one feels remains to say, and a thing that one knows remains covered, and a sublime vestige of God that is revealed to the soul, which remains to follow, pursue and seek, and a most high knowledge of God that cannot be explained, which for that the soul calls an indefinable something. So much that if the other one that I hear (understand) breaks my heart, the one that I do not succeed in hearing (understanding) and for which I have a noble feeling, makes me die. That sometimes happens to advanced souls to which God, what they hear or see or know, and sometimes without these things, performs the favor of giving an exalted instruction, in which they are given to hear and to feel the eminence and greatness of God: and in this feeling the soul feels from God so highly, that it understands clearly that everything remains to be understood. And this understanding and feeling, that divinity is so immense that it cannot be perfectly understood, is a very excellent, very exalted and very eminent knowledge: and thus one of the greatest favors that God gives in passing into this life, is to clearly give to understand to the soul and make it feel so highly about God, that it understands and knows patently that it cannot be either entirely understood or felt; because this is not in the slightest in the way of those who see it in heaven, where those who know more, understand the infinite which remains for them to understand more distinctly than those who see it less, to which what remains for them to understand does not appear so distinctly as to the others who see it more. I believe that whoever has not experienced it, will not be able to understand it; but the soul which has experience with it, as it sees that what it has a very noble feeling about, remains for it to understand it calls it an I-don't-know-what (indefinable something), because, as it is not understood, so can it again be said even though it can certainly be felt. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 7)

20. In this actual state the soul cannot perform these acts, if the Holy Spirit does not specially push it to that; that is why all its acts are divine, in so far as it is moved by God with this particularity. From where it comes that it seems to the soul that each time this flame blazes, making it love with divine favor and temperament, it is given eternal life, which raises it to divine operation in God.

This is the language that God speaks, and which he uses with purged and clean souls, which is from [These are not distinct words, but operating and effective impressions.] completely embraced words, as David says; [Psalms 118:140 in the Vulgate Version (119:140 in the King James Version from 1611)] Your speeches are greatly passionate, and the Prophet Jeremiah; [Jeremiah 23:29] Are not my words like fire, which as the same Lord says in St. John [John 6:63] are spirit and life, from which the souls which have the ears to hear them feel the virtue and the effect, which souls are pure and in love: for the ones which do not have the wholesome place and which savor other things, cannot taste the spirit and the life which is in them. That is why all the more that the Son spoke loudly, all the less did some of them take taste of it, because of their impurity, like when he preached the so savory and loving doctrine of the sacred Eucharist, several of them withdrew themselves. And because such persons do not taste the [This word is a savory intelligence, which says all without saying anything, which expresses all without specifying anything.] language of God who speaks so loudly in the interior, they should not however think that others do not savor them, as St. Peter certainly tasted them when he answered Jesus Christ: [John 6:68] Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. And the Samaritan Woman [John 4:28] forgot the water and her jug for the gentleness of the words of God. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 1, Verse 1)

21. So the soul being so close to his divine Majesty, that it is transformed into the flame of love where the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are communicated to it, is it an unbelievable thing to say that in this inflammation of the Holy Spirit it tastes a little of eternal life, although it may not be perfectly because the condition of this life does not permit it.

This is why it calls this flame living: not that it may never be otherwise; but because it brings about such an effect in it, that he makes it live spiritually in God, and taste the life of God in the manner that David says [Psalms 83:2 (84:2 KJV)]: my heart and my flesh rejoiced in the living God: not that living needs to be said, for God is always so; but in order to give to understand that the spirit and the senses taste God [So as to confuse nothing, one must understand that these feelings which are spoken about here are indeed different from the first to which one had to die, because they were mixed with impurities. These are purified feelings, which come from the immediate and substantial operation of God, which spurts out, into the feelings in a manner as pure as it is ineffable.] vividly, and that is rejoicing in the living God: and thus the soul in this flame vividly feels God and tastes him so with savor that it says: O living flame, o holy ardor! (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 1, Verse 1)

22. See Union Number 55.

23. See Acts Number 10.

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

24. St. Thomas: To say is related in three ways to what is said; one by means [This speaking is an operation in the soul.] of statement. – The other in the way of a cause, and this firstly and principally suits God, because he has done all things through his Word according to what the Psalmist says [Psalms 32:9 (33:9 KJV)]: He has spoken and they are done. (2.2.Q.76.a.6) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 1)

25. St. Bernard: The language of the Word is the favor of its goodness; but that of the soul is the fervor of devotion. When the Word moves this tongue wanting to speak to the soul, the soul could not feel it. – To the Word then, to talk [God sometimes speaks to the soul not with forms but substantially; at other times without saying anything, and almost always he imprints the operation without any known word.] to the soul, you are beautiful, and call it friend, is to give it the power to love and presume to be loved. – And consequently the speech of the Word is the infusion of the gift; the response of the soul is admiration with an act of grace. (Sermon 45 on the Canticle) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 1)

26. St. Teresa: Being in this great agony these words alone was sufficient to pull me from pain, and pacify me entirely: Do not fear my daughter, I will not abandon you, do not fear. It seems to me according to the state where I was that I needed several hours to be persuaded to put myself in repose, and nobody could do it; and there I was with these sole words in the calm with strength, courage, assurance, tranquility and light; in such a manner that in an instant I saw my soul entirely changed, and it seems to me that I had disputed and asserted against everyone that this was the good Spirit. O goodness of God! His words are truly works --. And so I said: Who is the one whom all my powers obey in this way and who is an instant gives light and clarity in such great darkness. (*Life* Chapter 25) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 1)

27. St. Bonaventure: Consider that the word of God which comes from his mouth, does not return empty to God; but it is useful and fruitful, and does all the things for which he sent it, so that you can also say, the grace [I Corinthians 15:10] of God has not been empty in me. (Path 2 of Eternity) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 1)

28. The Blessed Thomas of Villeneuve: What I also believe is achieved in the Saints in this life, when God, not through the Scriptures, but through himself, speaks to them, and that which is written is achieved; [John 6:45] they will all be capable of being taught by God: when the Spirit speaks in this way, every letter is distasteful. (On the Canticum) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 1) Adding:

29. The doctrine of the word of God operating and effective or infused St. Gregory also teaches: Therefore the answer to God is to pour out into their souls the willing anticipation of his visit. (Book 2 on Moral Chapter 4)

30. Father Bartelemy of the Martyrs has taught very well that these words come about in the silence of the soul: For, he says, when the faculties of the soul silence themselves and stop their own action, God himself speaks, and disposes and moves these powers of the spirit to his will, making a very noble and very excellent piece of work in the soul. (*Abridgement* Part 2, Chapter 11) What Samuel wanted to express saying to God: [I Samuel 3:10] speak Lord, for your servant is listening: and in Ecclesiastes that is expressed in these terms: [Chapter 32:9] Listen by silencing yourself and for this reverence good grace will come near to you. (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 5, Section 3)

31. St. Bernard: I confess that the Word has come into me several times: but even though it has often entered me, [Ignorance of divine operation sometimes because of its delicacy] I did not feel it. Sometimes when it has entered, I felt it present, I remember that it was present; I even sometimes had a presentiment of its entry, but could never feel it, nor even its departure. For from where it came into my soul, where it left too, after withdrawing, or through where it entered or departed. I yet at present confess that I am overlooking it, in accordance with these words: [John 3:8] You know not where he goes or from where he comes; and yet this is not a wonder, because it is he to whom it was said; [Psalms 76:20 (77:20 KJV)] Your vestiges (traces) will not be known. – Then the (Word) Husband sometimes entering my house in this way never made its entry known by any mark, either by voice, or beauty, or by foot steps. (Sermon 74 on the Canticum) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 6, Section 1)

32. St. Bonaventure: Sometimes, o good Jesus, panting and gasping for you, with eyes closed, you place in the mouth of my heart that which is permitted for me to know. (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 6, Section 1)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account of

33. St. Bernard: Someone will possibly ask me what it is to possess the Word. I answer that he should rather look for someone who has experience with it; or certainly myself, if I had it, do you think that I can express that which is ineffable? Listen to a man who has experienced it: [II Corinthians 5:13] For if we are out of our minds, it is for God; if we are rational, it is for you; which is to say: It is something else with God, he alone being the arbitrator of it: and something else with you; I have been permitted to experience that but not to explain it. [Prayer Section 1, Number 17] O you, who are curious to know what it is to enjoy the Word, prepare for him not your ear, but your spirit! The tongue does not teach that, but grace; it is hidden to the Wiseman and the prudent and revealed to the little people; [Humility Number 11] My brothers, humility is a great and sublime virtue, which deserve what it is not taught, which is worthy of having what could not be learned, worthy of conceiving through the Word and from the Word what it cannot express with words! Why is that? It is not that humility deserves it; but it is because it thus pleased the Father of the Word, the Husband of the soul, Our Lord Jesus Christ. (Sermon 85 on the Canticum) (Notes on John of the Cross Discourse 1, Section 1) Where the same Father adds:

34. In these such lofty and spiritual matters, as the Saints say, where experience surmounts doctrine, where he who does it cannot say it, where the tongue is not mistress, but grace, where humility attains what it takes the effort for and takes flight, and where it learns that which cannot be taught, where the substantial Word of the Father performs such wonders that could not be expressed, where one must not be governed by understanding or by the rules of the masters, where the moans of prayer, the communication of God as Husband, experience and heavenly sweetness are the school and education, where lightness darkens, where darkness lights up, where one must look at only what one sees, which is not acquired through discourse, but through the season or the point where the fire of love leads, where death and holy despair is the true disposition to this divine life; how in these matters, I say, do we place order, or limits, or fixed prices,

on the terms through which one must explain such elevated things? Wanting that which is immense and ineffable to pass through ordinary rules, without exceeding the common phrases and guarded terms of the schools of the Disciples and Masters. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Disciple 1, sentence 1)

35. This is also touched on, in Psalms 36:7 (37:7 KJV) where there is according to the Hebrew: Silence yourself to the Lord and pray: that seems impossible: because to pray is to speak; and quiet all sound do not act and wait to receive, and to what God performs in the soul, for that the Hebrew adds, Wait for it: Nevertheless as this silence must be from a person who takes care and who watches, it is not a leisure activity, but an operation: it is the respect to keep quiet and not hinder the work that God wants to do there, which requires the soul not meddling in it with its own: for that would divert and lose everything. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Discipline 1, sentence 2)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

36. Sometimes does the soul not only become aware of the presence of God, but it listens to him speak with some interior lucidity and persuasion, which take the place of words: sometimes it feels him speak and speaks back to him; but so secretly, so gently, that it happens without the holy peace and quietude being lost; and such that without waking up, it is awake with him; that is to say, it is awake and speak from the heart to its beloved with much sweet tranquility and gracious repose, as if it were softly slumbering. And at other times it feels the Husband speak; but it cannot speak to him, because the comfort of hearing him or the reverence that it carries for him, keeps it in silence: or even because it is in drought and so beaten down in spirit, that it has the strength only to hearken and not to speak to him; as it happens corporeally to those who begin to fall asleep, or who are greatly weakened by some malady. But finally sometimes it neither hears its Beloved, nor speaks to him, nor feels any sign of his presence. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 11)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

37. What I just told you, o my Daughter, and my Wife, is to pull you away from me [God sometimes for a brief moment shows the soul the exalted state where he placed it through his goodness; but that comes about without reflection, and passively, as it cannot give itself this view, nor either remove it.] in evidence of yourself. It is to tell and make you understand everything: for my essential action and operation in you are my speaking and my discussion with you, not only in all that, but infinitely beyond. That is what makes our common rejoining and our common repose. –

Here is my Daughter my Wife, that which I am in you, and that which you are in me. For as my Humanness and my Divinity subsist equally each from the other, each in the other, and each for the other; in the same way in proportion and in some manner, your humanness made not in the least divine, subsists from me, in me and for me. And as I possess purely and fully and always equally for me, all the happiness due to my nature, from that you arise through loving redundancy of my excessive love, the simple and abundant flux of my happiness, in proportion to what you are and what you possess in me from your full and entire satiation. (*Soliloquy* 6, Chapter 7)

38. You understand me well in all that: and all these secrets are for you and for me the deepest, most loving and most intimate excess of our reciprocal love, and particularly mine toward you and in you. I repeat it again; we possess each other through an equal and reciprocal love in our equal happiness, in the manner that you know. -- So wherever you go or leave to, you will never be without me and without my glory, and leaving without leaving, you will return into me in the same enjoyment of myself and of my glory, from which you will never have departed. (*Soliloquy* Chapter 8)

SECTION 19  
EXPERIENCE. INTELLIGENCE

SHORT METHOD

If those who have difficulty in believing, that it is easy to find God through this path, or do not believe it from what they are told about it; but that they must have experience of it, and then they will judge for themselves: and they will see that they are indeed told very little in comparison to what it is.

We do not claim to elevate our feelings above those of the others, but we are sincerely telling that experience that we had as much by ourselves as through other souls. –

One will be yet more certain of the truth that he contains, if one wants to have the experience of it. – It is your piece of work, o Holy Child God, o uncreated Love, o mute and abstract Word, to make yourself to be loved, tasted and heard. (Preface)

The language of love is barbarous to he who does not love. (St. Bernard, see below Number 9) (Chapter 23, Number 8)

AUTHORITIES

ST. TERESA

1. It is very important that the Director be prudent: I mean that he have good judgment and be experienced; if with these two conditions the letters still are encountered there, that is a great good: but if these three things cannot be found together, the first two are the most important. (Life Chapter 13)

2. It is a mistake to believe that years will make us understand that which can only be know by experience. (Life Chapter 34)

3. See Union Number 41.

4. May those who have no experience of it know, that this thing, happens in this way, and that one is not aware of it, and that the soul knows it more clearly that I tell here; for it is not a thing that one can fake or imagine, seeing that we cannot acquire it with all our diligence. (Chat. Dem. IV Chapter 2)

5. I am entirely ready to follow what [I say the same with all my heart.] persons eminent in doctrine tell me: for even though they have no experience in these things, nevertheless they have an in desirable something in particular; so that as God chose them to enlighten his Church, where there is a truth to announce he makes it known to them, so that it may be received by others: and if they are not dissipated and dissolute, but servants of God, never will they be astonished by his splendors; for they certainly know that his power extends much farther: finally even though some things are not written, they find others in Scripture, through which they see that those ones can be admitted. I have a great experience with that; also like certain timid and skittish half scholars who have cost me much. (Chat. Dem. 5 Chapter 1)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

6. As for this route, at least for the highest route, and even for the middle one, the soul will hardly find a capable guide gifted with all the qualities necessary for that; because it is necessary for the Director to be wise, discrete and experienced; for even though in order to lead the spirit, the foundation may be learning and discretion, if this master nevertheless does not have experience with sublime things, he will never bring the soul there when God lures it there, and he could do it much wrong. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 4)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

7. St. Bonaventure: This Wisdom is different in that from all the other sciences; because in this one, it is necessary to have experience in oneself before understanding the terms, and here practice precedes theory. (*Mystic Theology* Preface) And further: This wisdom is a certain theory distinct and different from all speculative wisdom, which surpasses all capacity of understanding; and because several Wise men and Doctors do not attain this view, they mock this very exalted Wisdom, and consequently in that they fight against God, the sovereign distributor of this Wisdom. – However with the blessed St. Dennis, and (who is now) with Jesus Christ, I beseech whoever looks at this writing, to not show it to these ignorant Philosophers, to Doctors who lead a carnal life. –



If those who mock this wisdom come to know it through experience, they will indeed approve more and more gladly all that is said by the Mystic Doctors if they have an experienced knowledge. (Chapter 3) (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

8. St. Bernard: In these things the mind does not understand as much as experience attains. (Sermon 22 on the Canticle) (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

9. In this (Epithalamia) one must not think about the words, but about affections; why is that? If it is only that the holy Love, which is the sole matter of this whole book, must not be judged by the spoken word and the tongue; but by word and truth. Love speaks to it everywhere, and if someone longs to acquire the knowledge of things read here, that he loves; otherwise he who does not love, approaches in vain to hear or read this Canticle of love, because a frozen heart cannot understand embraced words: like he who is unlearned in Greek, will not understand whoever is speaking it, in the same way will the language of love be barbarous to he who does not love. (Sermon 79 on the Canticle) (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

10. D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: There are several people, says St. Bernard, who have been perfect in Mystic Theology without the speculative part; but never has any speculative Theologian acquired such a height of perfection, indeed has never even been perfect in Theology acquired with the Mystic side. – Now that happens in this way, because no one will ever be made able to understand the words of an Apostle or a Prophet, if he is not touched by and imbued with the affection of those who write them; in the same way will no one be able to understand perfect what the freedom of the children of God, or the gentleness of divine love are, if it is never given to him to experience them. (Abridgement Spiritual Chapter 12) (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

11. St. Thomas: In these words of Psalm 33:8 (34:8 KJV) – Taste, and you will see how gentle is the Lord. One calls tasting experiencing his divine goodness. And in I Peter 2:3 – If ever you have tasted how sweet he is. Two effects are assigned to experience; one is certainly to understanding; the other is an assurance of affection: as for the first, he says, and sees: for in the bodies first one sees, and afterward one tastes: but of spiritual things first one taste, and then after one sees; and for this reason he says first taste and after see. (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

12. Hugues of St. Victor: Experience is the mistress, which makes us understand things; and he who will know the truth perfectly is he who learned it not by listening to it, but by tasting it. (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

13. Dennis the Carthusian Monk: Contemplation is an experimental knowledge of God through an embrace united with love, or a savory sign from Divinity, when the highest point of affection is united to him through love. (Source of Light Article 13) (Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 2)

FATHER JAMES OF JESUS  
gives an account of

14. St. Bernard: See Hearing Number 33.

15. See Understanding Number 34.

16. St. Bonaventure: By means of this entire and absolute departure from the pure spirit outside of yourself and all things, and after you have quit everything and have unbound and extricated yourself from all things, you will be raised to the suressential ray of divine darkness. (St. Dennis Mystic Theology Chapter 1) If you may ask how that comes about? Examine grace, and not doctrine; desire, and not understanding; the sighs of prayer, and not study or reading; the Husband, not the master; God, not man; obscurity, not clarity; not the light, but the fire which inflames the whole soul and which transports it in God through excessive unctions and very ardent affection; is which fire embraces he who says; [Job 7:15] My soul chose strangling, and my bones death. He, who loves this death, can see God; because it is undoubtedly true [Exodus 33:20, See Short Method Chapter 24, Number 1] that no man may see me, and live. Let us then die and enter into the darkness, imposing silence on apprehensions, on concupiscence and on phantoms. (Itinerary of the Spirit in God Chapter 7) (Notes on John of the Cross Disciple 1, Section 1)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

17. I am very astonished that certain people, who place so much value on doctrine and a moral life, attack us on our terms. – Several of them are learned enough in every other subject but this one, and nevertheless they want to speak about it like knowing people, not knowing that these matters are learned only through savory experience, and that the senses and human intellect approach it no more through speculation than the land (earth) approaches the sky. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 3)

THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

18. It is not with the help of human science that one arrives at knowledge of Mystic Theology, which is without forms and images, which is to say, that it teaches prayer without thoughts and without any other action than obscure repose. This is the feeling of the Mystics.

Nobody, say some, [Harpius: *Mystic Theology* Book 3 Preface] can understand the Mystic secrets through the profundity of science, or through the subtlety of the mind, or whatever exercise one does; but very happy experience alone will guide those whom it pleases divine liberality to communicate itself. This Sapience, say others [Barbancon: Secret paths in the beginning.], is not of the earth, but of heaven; does not lie in well arranged beautiful words, but in the virtue of the Holy Spirit; does not proceed from the subtleness of the mind, but from the purity of life. In vain will you turn the pages of books, if you are not looking for the enjoyment of it: for it is not drawn from learning, but from experience, without which one will understand very little of all this Mystic speaking: these are secrets of love, if one does not taste them one will not understand them. – And Gerson [*Mystic Theology Considerations* Number 30]: with the knowledge that faith gives us, that God is wholly desirable and lovable, the will and affection will be ravished by this good without the study of books, if it is purged, illuminated and laid out. (Book 3, Treatise 5, Chapter 2, Section 2)

## SECTION 20 ECSTASY. VISIONS. REVELATIONS

This state is above Ecstasies. [*See the Treatise on Torrents Part 1, Chapter 9, Number 27 and the Life of the Author Part 1, Chapter 9. In order to understand this proposition, one must know that there are two sorts of ecstasies: one is fleeting and in the powers, which appears on the outside; and another which comes about through annihilation and a going forth from self in order to pass into God, and that one is lasting and permanent. It is about the first one that I wanted to speak when I said that this state is above ecstasies.*]

(Under the name Ecstasies are included Visions and Revelations.)

### CANTICLE

As there are three kinds of interior slumber, so does the Husband beseech us three times, on different occasions to not wake his Beloved.

The first slumber is in the union of the powers, where she has a slumber of violent ecstasy, which spreads out a lot into the senses. He entreats one to not wake her; because this slumber is then appropriate, in that it helps to detach the senses of their objects to which they had attached themselves impurely, and through this to even purify them. –

The third is the slumber of the permanent and lasting repose in God; it is a repose of ecstasy, but gentle and continual ecstasy, which no longer causes any alteration to the senses, the soul having passed into its God through the happy exit from itself. (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

In several passages I spoke about my writings on the true revelation of Jesus Christ, and especially in the Epistles of St. Paul. (See the Explanations on I Corinthians 1:8-9, Ephesians 1:17-18, 3:7-9)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. TERESA

1. As for me, I am seized by shock, seeing that the soul having reached here all raptures are removed from it, except sometimes. I call removing the rapture, that which is from these exterior effects, and from the loss of the senses and warmth. [St. Teresa is dealing with ecstasies of weakness: these are those of the powers and the loss of feelings. If only I could make it understand how dangerous it is to stop oneself at these things, and how the Devil insinuates and transfigures himself into an Angel of Light! But I would not be believed.]

However I am told that this is only an accidental thing for the raptures, and consequently that actually they are not removed, since in the interior they increase. The raptures then cease in the way that I insinuated, and the soul no longer suffers those violent ecstasies, and that flight of spirit: if that still happens sometimes, it is only rarely, and almost always it is not in public like before, and like it was so ordinary for the soul. And whatever great motives for devotion that it sees, that does not cause violent effects as formerly; because if the soul saw some picture of devotion, or heard a Sermon although with little application, it was in the same agonies, and in the same agitation as the little butterfly; everything made it afraid, and made it take flight. Presently, either because it has found its repose, or because the soul has seen so many things in this dwelling, that it is no longer shocked by anything, or because it no longer finds itself with this solitude, since it enjoys such company, or indeed, my Sisters, I am overlooking the cause of it, after Our Lord began to show it what there is in this dwelling and that he introduced it there; the great weakness which was before very arduous to it, and from which it had not yet been delivered, then comes to an end: it is perhaps because Our Lord supplied it with a greater strength, dilated it, and enabled it. (*Castle of the Soul VII Dem.* Chapter 3)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

2. In order to give an account of all that the Blessed John of the Cross says, to show the necessity [One of the principle reason for passing beyond all that, is that these sorts of things are contrary to true simplicity and nudity of faith, disposition preceding divine union.] of passing beyond these ecstasies, visions and words, and their danger, it would be necessary to copy a great part of his book. I will give some passages from it.

3. Of these supernatural instructions some are corporeal, others spiritual. The corporeal ones are of two kinds: some are received through the path of the exterior corporeal senses, the others through the path of the interior corporeal senses, in which is included all that the imagination seize, feign and fabricate.

The spiritual one is also of two types: one is distinct and particular; the other is indistinct, obscure and general. In the distinct and particular, four manners of particular apprehensions enter into it, which are communicated to the spirit without the intervention from any corporeal sense, namely visions, revelations, words and spiritual feelings. The obscure and general understanding consists of one alone, namely, the contemplation which is given in faith. It is [If contemplation in faith is the end of these four paths or ways, it is consistent with that it is above, and that it understands them all.] in it that one must put the soul, setting it on its way through the means of these others particular ones, beginning with the first and stripping and purifying it of them. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 10)

4. Now one must know that although all these other things can happen to the corporeal senses through the path of God, one must never be assured by them or admit them, but one must flee them entirely, without wanting to examine them to see if they are good or bad: for the more exterior and corporeal they are, the more [However one places more value in true corporeal visions than in the path of faith.] doubt there is, if they came from God, to who it is more proper to communicate oneself to the spirit, where there is more certainly and profit for the soul, than to the senses, where there is usually much danger and deceit; all the more because in them the corporeal sense makes itself judge and appraiser of spiritual things, thinking that they are like it feels them, even though there is as much difference between the body and the soul as there is between sensuality and reason. –

These objects and corporeal forms the more in self they are exterior, [However one places more value in these visions than in the path of faith.] the less are they useful to the interior and the spirit, because of the great distance and the little proportion that there is between the corporeal and the spiritual. For although sometimes they communicate a little spirit, as they always make as if from God, it is however much less than if the same things were more spiritual and interior. And thus they more easily causes errors, from the presumption, and from the vanity in the soul: because being so palpable and material, they move the senses strongly; and it seems to the judgment of the soul that this is some great thing, because it is very perceptible, and it runs after it thinking that this light is the guide and the means of its pretension (claim), which is to arrive at the union with God, and all the more does it lose the perfect path and means, which is faith, for placing value in that.

Moreover, the soul, which sees itself with these extraordinary things often, forms a secret opinion of itself that it is already something before God, which destroys humility. The Devil also slides into the soul a complacency and satisfaction hidden from itself, and which is sometimes clear and evident: that is why he often places these objects in the senses, showing to sight figures of holy and beautiful clearness, putting in hearing flattering and well disguised words, in smell sweet scents, sweets in the mouth, delights in touch: so that having enticed them with these initial sensations, he lures them into several evils. Consequently, one must always reject these displays and feelings: For even though some are from God, doing this does not hurt him and one will not miss receiving the usefulness and fruit of them that God wants to the soul in their own manner, although it refutes and rejects them.

But even though they are from God, if the soul stops for a long time in these feelings or exterior visions, and if the soul wants to allow them, it can fall into **Six** disadvantages. The **first** that the perfection of guiding oneself by faith may be diminished; in so far as the things that one feels with the senses, detract from it greatly, seeing that faith, as has been said, is above the senses, and in this way one is drawn apart from the means of the union with God, not closing the eyes of the soul to all the things of the senses. **Second**, if one does not renounce them that hinder the spirit in so far as the soul withdraws from it, instead of flying to the invisible. From where it comes that one of the reasons, for which Our Lord says [John 16:7] to his disciples, that he must leave, so that the Holy Spirit may come, was that: as also he does not let [John 20:17] Magdalene touch his feet after his resurrection, so that everyone may be better established in faith. **Third**, the soul becomes proprietary in these things, and does not walk in true resignation and nakedness of spirit. – **Fourth**, that it loses the effect and the spirit of it. **Fifth**, that it is going to lose the graces and benefits of God by making itself owner of them and not using them as it should: and to take them as property and not profit from them, is the same as wanting to take them only to stop in them and seek one's pleasure in them, and nevertheless God does not give them to it for this reason, neither must it easily convince itself that they are from God. **Sixth**, that by wanting to allow them the soul opens the door to the Devil to deceive it in similar things. –

It is therefore clear and evident that these visions and sentient apprehensions cannot serve as a method of the divine union, considering that they have no proportion (relation) with God. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 11)

5. Before speaking about imaginary visions, which are customarily presented, supernaturally to the interior sense, which is imagination and fantasy, we will deal with the natural apprehensions of the same interior corporal sense. –

What is first proposed in the interior corporeal sense, which is the imagination and fantasy, from which we must also evacuate all the imaginary forms and imaginations which can naturally fall into this, and can together prove that it is impossible for the soul to arrive at the divine union until it ceases its operation in them, in so far as they cannot be [This whole Chapter proves this proposition.] either an appropriate or close means to this union. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 12)

6. After having dealt with the apprehensions that the soul can naturally receive in self, and in which it operates with the imagination and fantasy, it is necessary to speak about the supernatural ones that are called imaginary visions, which

being subject to images, forms and figures, belong to this interior and corporeal sense, as well as the natural ones. Now one needs to know that under this name of imaginary visions we mean all the things which can be supernaturally present to the imagination under any images, forms, figures or species; and that with very perfect species. –

Under these images God shows several things to the soul, and teaches it great wisdom, which we see in each encounter with the Holy Scripture. – These imaginary visions happen more often to advanced persons than the exterior corporeal ones, and do not differ from those which enter through the exterior senses in so far as images and species; but as for the effect that they create in the soul, and as for their perfection there is much to say. –

This sense of the imagination and fantasy is that to which the Devil ordinarily addresses himself with his ruses; for this is the door and the entry to the soul --. That is why God and the Devil come here with images and forms in order to offer them to the understanding, although God does not make use of this means alone to instruct the soul, seeing that he remains substantially in it, and can do so as much through itself as through other means. –

Consequently, I say that of all these apprehensions and imaginary visions, and all others which are offered under forms and images or whatever particular intelligence, either fake on the part of the Devil, or genuine on the part of God, the understanding must never be embraced or enticed by them, and the soul must never allow them or get a foot hold in them, if it wants to be detached, stripped, pure and simple without any method, as is required for the divine union --.

Therefore in order to come to this so perfect union of God, the soul must carefully watch out to not lean on, and attach itself to imaginary visions, or forms, or figure, or particular intelligence, since they cannot serve as any proportionate or near method for such a result, but on the contrary would be a hindrance for it. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 16)

7. I will tell in this Chapter what will suffice to satisfy our doubt, which is to know, why God, who is most wise and who is so careful to remove the traps for the soul, offers and communicates these supernatural visions to the souls, since there is so much peril to pass with them and advance like we said. In order to answer that it is necessary to propose three principles. The first is from St. Paul, who says that [Romans 13:1] the things, which come from God, are subordinate. The second is from the Holy Spirit, in the Book [Wisdom 8:1 – “*Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily: and sweetly doth she order all things.*”] of Wisdom where it says, that it sweetly arranges things --. The third is from the Theologians [Divine Motion Number 8] who say that God moves all things in their fashion. Now it is obvious from these principles, that God, in order to move the soul and raise it up again from the end and the extremity of its baseness to the other end and extremity of its greatness in its divine union, he must do it with order, and sweetness and in the manner of the soul. From this comes that God in order to raise the soul to sovereign knowledge and do it gently, must begin with the lowest degree and with the extremity of the senses of the soul, in order to raise it thus in its own fashion to the other end of spiritual wisdom, which does not fall under the senses.

Which gives rise to the spiritual proverb, that when one has once tasted of the spirit, all flesh disgusts, that is to say, that the tastes and the sentient paths are no longer pleasing or useful, in which one means; all which is from action and proceeds from the sense concerning the spiritual things. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Chapter 17)

8. In this matter of visions one cannot be as brief as one would certainly like to be, because there is too much to say. – The reason which makes me extend this, is the little discretion that I recognized, it seems to me, in certain spiritual Masters, who are assured by the said supernatural apprehensions, because they believe them to be good and from God. Each one of them is greatly misused and has remained briefly, accomplishing in them the words of Jesus Christ: [Matthew 15:14] If a blind person leads another blind person both fall into a pit. He does not say, they will fall, but they fall; for it is not necessary for there to be a fall in error for them to fall, because the presumptuousness alone of governing each other is already a mistake; and so they at least fall in that. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 18)

9. We said that the visions and words from God, although they be true and certain in self, are not always so in our manner of conceiving and understanding, and that for two reasons; the one comes from our defective way of understanding, the other from the causes or foundations that they have, being often conditional and not always as it seems. [For example, in the things, which regard neighbors and depend on their free will to correspond or not correspond, even though the thing may be true in self, the person does not receive the effect of it; lack of correspondence.] For example, if that is not corrected or if that comes about, even though the word in which it rings, may be absolute, and without condition. – For the first one, it is well known that they are not and do not happen always like they ring in our manner of understanding the cause of that is that God being immense and profound, customarily in this prophesies, revelations and words has conceptions and comprehensions very different from the subject of which commonly we can understand them, being in them all the more true and certain because it seems to us that they are not. – God said to Abraham, [Genesis 15:7-8] I will give you this earth. – And to Jacob [Genesis 46:3-4] Do not fear, Jacob, go down into Egypt; I will go down with you, and when you go from there, I will draw you back, leading you: which however did not happen as one took it to happen in our manner of understanding.

One sees through this that although the words and revelations are from God, one must not be assured by them, because one can easily be deceived in our manner of understanding. For they are an abyss and profoundness of spirit. –

And even though they come covered with the senses, man does not understand them, as St. Paul says, [I Corinthians 2:14] that the natural man does not know the things which pertain to the Spirit of God; because to him they are foolish and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritual, but the spiritual person judges all things. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 19)

10. God sometimes speaks by silencing the condition, like he did to the Ninivites, for whom he foretold [Jonah 3:4] determinedly, that they would perish at the end of forty days. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 20)

11. Certain Spirituals are being assured, as we have said, and not making a great reflection on curiosity, which they sometimes make use of in order to know things through supernatural routes, think that since God sometimes responds to their requests, that it is well done, and that his Majesty takes pleasures in it: I certainly want it to be true that God answers them, it is not however a good procedure, and God does not take pleasure in it; so much does it lack, that displeases him, and furthermore he is often angered by it and resents it a lot. The reason for that is, because it is not for created beings to go outside of the terms that God dictated to them for their behavior. –

You will perhaps say to me, if that is so, why does he sometimes respond? I say that sometimes it is the Devil who responds; that if it is God, he is accommodating himself to the weakness of the soul which wants to follow this route, lest he make it uncomfortable and let it turn around, or for fear that it thinks God is evil with it, and so that it may not be too tempted. --

The father of a family has several various meats on his table, some more delicate than others: there is a child who wants to have what is on a plate closest, although it is not the best; he asks for some, because he eats better from that one than from another. The father sees that if he gave him some of the best, he would not want any, but he will take only what he asks for, which is to his liking; for fear that he may remain without food and savory, he gives him some of it with regrets, as God did [I Samuel 8:7, 22] with the children of Israel when they asked him for a King: for he accorded one of them against his liking, because that was not what they needed. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Chapter 21)

12. This Savior and this interior taste therefore, that we say that these profiteers find and savor in their spirit with abundance and facility, is communicated to them much more abundantly than beforehand, rebounding from there to the senses more than usual in front of this sentient purgation; because being already more pure, he can more easily feel the tastes of the spirit in his manner. And finally as this sentient sphere of the soul is weak and incapable of the strong matters of the spirit, from this comes that these profiteers because of this spiritual communication, which comes about in the sentient sphere, suffer much damage and debility of the stomach, and consequently of the work in the spirit; in so far as, the Wise man says, [Wisdom 9:15 – “**For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.**”] the corrupted body burdens the soul: From where it comes that the communication of these ones cannot be very strong, or very intense, or as spiritual as they are required to be for the union with God, because of the weakness and the corruption of sensuality, which has part in it. And from this comes the raptures, the ecstasies, the dislocations of the bones, which always happen when the communications are not purely spiritual, which is to say, to the spirit alone, as are those of the people already purified by the fertile night of the spirit, who have no more ravishing and torments of the body, enjoying the liberty of the spirit without the sense being offended and coming to alienate itself. Now in order to know the necessity that these profiteers have for entering into this night of the spirit, we will notice some imperfections and dangers in which they find themselves. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 1)

He deduces these imperfections and these properties throughout the whole Chapter and the following until the end. And he adds: (See #13 below)

13. Consequently the soul must enter into the fertile night of the spirit in order to come to the divine union, where perfectly uniting the sense and the spirit of all these apprehensions and flavors, one must make it walk in pure and obscure faith, which is the proper and eligible means through which the soul unites itself with God in accordance with what he says in Hosea 2:20; I will marry you in faith, which is to say, I will unite you with me in faith. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 2)

There are so many other things on this matter that I will stop here, to speak about the true revelation of Jesus Christ essential word, work or the Word.

14. But doubt is how the soul can endure such a strong communication in flesh, for in fact there is neither reason nor strength in it to suffer so much without a lapse: seeing the Queen Esther having only seen King Ahasuerus on his throne with clothes of royal splendor, dazzling with gold and gems, trembled so strongly in seeing him so terrifying in his appearance, that she fainted, as she confesses, saying [Esther 15:6-7 – “**Then having passed through all the doors, she stood before the king, who sat upon his royal throne, and was clothed with all his robes of majesty, all glittering with gold and precious stones: and he was very dreadful. Then lifting up his countenance that shone with majesty, he looked very fiercely upon her: and the Queen fell down, and was pale, and fainted, and bowed herself upon the head of the maid**

that went before her.”] that because of the fear that she had of his glory, having appeared to her like an Angel of God, and his face full of grace, her heart had been completely moved and upset, because glory oppresses whoever looks at it, when it does not glorify him. Now how much should the soul faint away here? Since what it knows, is not an Angel, but God himself and the Lord of the Angels, with his face full of the graces of all the creatures, with a terrifying power and glory, and with the voice of a multitude of excellences, about which voice Job speaks in this way: [Job 26:14] Seeing that we have hardly heard but a small bit of his word, who could watch the thunder of his greatness? And elsewhere [Job 23:6] I do not want him to contend against me with much force, lest he oppress me with the weight of his greatness. But there are two reasons why the soul does not default and does not fear in this powerful and glorious awakening; the first, because the soul being already in a state of perfection, as it is here, where the inferior sphere is very purged and in accordance with the spirit, it feels neither the damage nor the pain that the spirit which is not purged and disposed to receive is accustomed to suffering. The second and principle cause is that which is specified in the first verse, namely, that God shows himself to be kindly and loving: for as he shows this glory and greatness to the soul in order to cherish and exult it, in the same way does he favor and strengthen it, protecting its nature, showing his greatness to the spirit with love and gentleness, which can easily be done by he who held [Exodus 33:22] Moses on his right to make him see his glory. And so the soul finds in him so much gentleness and love, that it feels power, sovereignty and greatness, because in God all is one same thing. From where it comes that delight and protection are strong in gentleness and love; strong in order to bear a strong delight, so well that the soul remains strong and powerful rather than swooning or in some lapse. If the Queen [Esther 15:9-12 – “*Esther, what is the matter? I am thy brother, be of good cheer: Thou shalt die, though our commandment be general: come near. And so he held up his golden scepter, and laid it upon her neck, And embraced her, and said, Speak unto me.*” (Apocrypha or Writings)] faints, it is because the King did not at the beginning show himself favorable to her, but (as it said in this passage) with burning and blazing eyes he showed her the fury of his chest: but as soon as he favored her and extended his scepter touching and embracing her, she came back to self, after having told him that he was her brother, and that she feared nothing. In the same way the King of Heaven governing himself in the first place with the soul as his Husband his brother, it has no fear: for showing it with gentleness and not in fury the strength of his power and the love of his goodness, he communicates to it the strength and love of his chest; coming forth from his throne toward it as the Husband of his bed, where he was hidden, and inclining himself toward it, he touches it with the scepter of his Majesty and embraces it as a brother. There then the royal garments and their perfumes, which are the admirable virtues of God; the splendor of the gold which is charity; the brilliant shine of the gems, are the supernatural instructions, and the face of the Word full of grace, invests and clothes the soul like a Queen: in such a manner that transformed in these virtues of the King of Heaven it sees itself become Queen, and one can truly say about it what David said: [Psalms 44:13 (or 45:13 KJV)] The Queen is beside you with a garment enriched with gold, surrounded by variety. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 4, Verse 2)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

15. You see, Theotime, that the flowing out of a soul into its God is nothing other than true ecstasy [True ecstasy of permanent will.], through which the soul is completely outside the boundaries of its natural bearing, completely mixed, absorbed and engulfed in its God. From where it comes that those who reach this holy excess of divine love, having afterwards, returned to themselves, find nothing on earth which contents them, living in an extreme annihilation of themselves, remaining languid in all which belongs to the senses; and perpetually have in their hearts the maxim of the Blessed Virgin, Teresa of Jesus says: that which is not God is nothing to me: and it seems to me that it was the loving passion of the great friend of the Beloved which said: [Galatians 2:20] I live, no longer I, but Jesus Christ lives in me; and; [Colossians 3:3] our life is hidden with Jesus Christ in God. For tell me, I beg of you, Theotime, if a rudimentary drop of water flung into an ocean of water were living, and it could speak and tell the state in which it was, would it not cry out with great joy: O mortals, I live truly; but I am not living myself, but this ocean lives in me, and my life is hidden in this chasm. The soul, which is flowed out into God, does not die: for how could it die from being engulfed in life? But it lives without living in itself, because as the stars without losing their light no longer shine in the presence of the Sun, but the Sun shines in them, and they are hidden in the light of the Sun; so does the soul, without losing its life, no longer live [O ecstasy without error and without suspicion!] mixed with God, but God lives in it. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 12)

16. The two ecstasies, of the understanding and of the will, do not so much belong to each other, as one is not often without the other: for as the Philosophers has more knowledge than love of their Creator, so do good Christians have more love than knowledge, and consequently the excess of knowledge is not always followed by an excess of love, no more than the excess of love is accompanied by excess of knowledge. Now the ecstasy of admiration being alone does not make us better, according to he who was ravished in ecstasy up to the third heaven. If I comprehend, he says [I Corinthians 13:2] all the mysteries and all knowledge, but I do not have charity, I am nothing. And consequently the evil spirit can go into ecstasies, if one must speak in this way, and ravish the understanding, displaying for it some wonderful powers of the mind which keep it elevated and suspended above its natural forces: and with such

enlightenments it can still give the will some vain, soft, tender and imperfect love, through means of complacency, satisfaction and sensory consolation. But to give true ecstasy [This ecstasy alone causes nothing extraordinary on the outside.] of the will, through which it attaches itself solely and powerfully to divine goodness, belongs only to this Sovereign Spirit, through which the charity of God is spread out in our hearts. (*On the Love of God* Book 7, Chapter 5)

17. Actually, Theotime, in our age we have seen several people, who believed that they themselves and several people with them, were very often divinely ravished in ecstasy, and finally we discovered that these were only illusions and devilish amusements. A certain Priest from the time of St. Augustine, put himself in ecstasy whenever he wanted, (singing) chanting certain mournful and pitiful songs, and that only in order to satisfy the curiosity of those who longed to see this spectacle. But what is admirable, is that his ecstasy passed so far that he did not even feel it when a flame was applied to him, except after he had come back to self, and nevertheless if someone spoke a little but loudly in a clear voice, he heard it as if it were from far away, and did not breathe. The Philosophers themselves recognized certain types of natural ecstasies, made through the vehement application of the spirit to the consideration of more lofty things: this is why one must not be shocked if the evil spirit in order to do the monkey (*faire le singe*), deceive the souls, scandalized the work, and transform itself in a spirit of light, performs raptures in some souls who are not very solidly instructed in true piety. –

If the ecstasy is more beautiful than good, more luminous than warming, more speculative than affective, it is very dubious and worthy of suspicion. I am not saying that one cannot have raptures, visions even prophetic ones, without having charity: for I certainly know that as one can have charity without being in rapture or prophesying, so can one be in rapture and prophecy without having charity; but I am saying that he who in his rapture has more clarity in the understanding in order to admire God, than he has love in the will in order to love him, must be on guard: for there is danger that this ecstasy may be fake, and inflates the spirit more than educates it, putting it like Saul, Balaam, Caiphe between the prophets, but nevertheless leaving it between reproves. –

The third kind of completely holy, pleasant ecstasy, which crowns the two others, is the ecstasy of work and life, the entire observation of the commandments of God. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 6)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

18. One must know that the created being in this state is largely removed from its consummation, while it is capable of receiving something in the divine light either for simple speculation, or for the taste, or for ecstasy, which are completely different things. For its consummation must not and cannot be but the end and the success of all these mystic means.

But that, which has remained of this, for the soul lost in God, is something else completely: and this is what ravishes it imperceptibly and in what its very simple and ineffable enjoyment grows and increases. Happiness that it possesses in its ineffable, very simple and very unique repose which makes it feel that one can neither go nor pass beyond. For here the comprehension of the created being, its taste, and all its enjoyment are above all expression. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 4)



## SECTION 21

### SPIRITUAL FERTILITY WITHOUT LEAVING THE DIVINE UNITY

This Fertility is taken in two ways: one to do the good, which regards only the soul; and the other to help one's neighbor, as one has already seen in Communications.

#### SHORT METHOD

The virtues pleasantly pour out into this soul, which practices them in such an easy manner, that they seem to be natural to it. It has a seed of life and fertility, which gives it a facility for all which is good, and insensitivity for all which is evil. (Chapter 13, Number 2)

#### CANTICLE

This is what can be called the Apostolic state, in which the soul is not only Wife, but also fertile: for God as the mouth, is for some time united to this soul before making it fertile with his own fertility. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

He will even do something more in the following part, uniting me to him fundamentally; and then I will be fertile, and for my Husband I will bear fruits incomparably more beautiful than those that I was asking for. (Chapter 2, Verse 6)

The Wife here receives the talents to help the souls, marked by its breasts; but it does not receive it with all the fullness, which will be communicated to it following this: this talent is imprinted in it only as a seed of fertility. (Chapter 4, Verse 5)

As soon as the soul has arrived at the happiness of being received forever [This word forever is to signify that this union is permanent, and that it is no longer like these unions which are trial unions rather than a genuine union: as one sees the seas trifle with something on its shore for a long time, the wave seems to take the thing from its place and then put it back in the same place, until the wave engulfs it in itself; as soon as it is in the bottom, it is there forever; which does not prevent it from being pulled from there through some accident, like being fished out or some other way.] into its God it becomes mother and wet nurse. [These words mother and wet nurse means, that not only does God make use of the soul to convert many other souls, but he gives it the means to help them according to their need. For there are people who have the grace of conversion, who do not have the grace of spiritual education: But those who have this grace, their word, their presence alone without words, strengthen, sustain, bring to God, suckle, to speak in this way, a soul which is like a dry and arid ground. The presence alone of these people, who are completely with God, makes it secrete into the others like a heavenly dewdrop. In the same way that dirty and shameless souls communicate this corrupted air to those who near them: thus through an opposite effect a pure soul communicated purity; and as it is full of grace and sacred from the divine unction, it communicates this grace and unction to those who near it. And as it is full of God alone, it can communicate only God. As it is empty of self, it no longer communicates itself, or anything of itself, but the image and the grace of its divine Husband. From where it comes that the remembrance of these people, very far from imprinting their impure image, first brings to God and collects in him: this is the most sure sign that the soul has quit itself in order to pass into God, that it itself has disappeared, that it no longer lives itself, but that God lives in it; since it no longer gives any species other than those by which it itself is affected.

One must also notice, that it is not through any exterior sign that it gathers the others, but as it has arrived in the Center, the impression is made on the inside, as if it were God himself, without any of it appearing on the outside; because this soul in exiting from itself: but the image and the grace of its divine Husband. From where it comes that the remembrance of these people, very far from imprinting their impure image, first brings to God and collects in him: this is the most sure sign that the soul has quit itself in order to pass into God, that it itself has disappeared, that it no longer lives itself, but that God lives in it; since it no longer gives any species other than those by which it itself is affected.

One must also notice, that it is not through any exterior sign that it gathers the others, but as it has arrived in the Center, the impression is made on the inside, as if it were God himself, without any of it appearing on the outside; because this soul in exiting from itself has passed beyond its own depths in order to lose itself in God beyond itself: it therefore leaves no trace or idea of itself, but of God, his love and his life. This happened through the effect of a grace infinitely more abundant in Mary than to her cousin St. Elisabeth, felt Jesus Christ and the grace diffused in Mary which was communicated to John the Baptist (Luke 1:41). It was this same grace of the anointing of the Husband, which ravishes St. John, the Apostle at the supper. This is to be the good scent of Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 2:15). For as disordered people inspire and communicate only their corruption, infecting all which approaches them, so does a soul full of God communicate only purity and love of God and one feels that this comes about without the intervention of the word. As this scent of honey attracts scattered flies, so does this scent of Jesus Christ attract the souls to him.

When I spoke about the Apostolic state, I wanted to make it understood that the people who are not called to that by their state, like the Laity, must do it only through a particular vocation and in that state. What obliged me to write about that, is that all the people who begin to feel the presence of God in them, they are so ravished by what they feel that they would like everyone to possess it; and as this grace is given to them only for themselves, that makes them not very useful for the others, and they do much damage to themselves, losing this divine unction which is given to them for their own sanctification. St. Teresa recognized this mistake in herself, and shows the consequence of it. (See her *Life* Chapter 13 and Fault Number 4) It is to be noticed that beginner souls are much more eager to help others, than those about which I am speaking; for those I am speaking about, have no eagerness; on the contrary their principle foundation is to be separated from everything, and from all that they do, is done without life, without noticeable zeal and through providence. I say without noticeable zeal; because they have the true pure, imperceptible zeal, which is only awakened on pressing occasions. Then they feel these words of Jesus Christ: The zeal of your house devours me; (John 2:17) a sign that their zeal is sincere. Is that they willingly before God take charge of suffering all for the souls; is that they never refute their faults; is that no human respect stops them from telling these same faults when it is time to tell them; is that they fear neither persecution nor death for themselves, so that they may know the truth and what God wants from them, although they desist from helping them with ease, because they have no attachment. Beginner souls are not the same way: they refute easily; the slightest persecution or contradiction puts them all in reflection and returns them to themselves; they follow a certain unction that they taste by speaking. Like a person who has a precious balm, in breaking the vessel which contains it, smells the admirable scent and is satisfied with this scent without thinking of the loss that he has come to: in the same way do these beginner souls tasting some sweets by speaking to souls, lose the grace and unction which is given to them for themselves. It is not the same way with these souls to which grace is not given in proportion through measure; because having nothing themselves and being no longer in themselves in a good sense, it is Jesus Christ their Husband who communicates himself into them and through them. Beginning people in their conversations, especially with people of the opposite sex, certainly feel a mixture of sensuality, and even very often friendship or natural love slides into it: this is not the same here, where all that is dead and extinguished. After the conversations there remain some traces, some mutual species: it is not the same with these souls, which leave no species of themselves, but certainly the vestiges of God who alone lives in them; so that it can be known by all the people of integrity and honest spirit, without excluding a single one from either sex.]

Fertility is given to it: it is placed by condition in the Apostolic life. [This state becomes fitting to the soul: and when it sees no one, it will not fail to serve its neighbor, as God made known to the Blessed Angela of Foligni, that in her favor, and without her even knowing it, God has given her an infinity number of souls beyond the seas: this is reported in her *Life*. (See Chapter 20 or {Book 2, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 1, Number 9} in the edition of Holland and the last Chapter Number 2) It is not the mind, which must judge these souls; for as their path is very much above the mind, the heart alone must judge them when it is separated from the reasoning and prejudices of the mind.] Ever since then the lips of this person are like a ray of honey, which continually exudes in favor of the souls. It is only his lips, and not his words; because it is the Husband who speaks through his Wife, and the lips of his Wife serve as the organ to express his divine word. The honey and the milk, he tells her, are under the tongue that I give to you: it is I who place this honey and this milk under your tongue, and who makes them spread out through you in favor of the souls according to their reach. The Wife is all honey for those that must be won by the gentleness of consolation. She is all milk for the souls who have become simple and child-like. The scent of your virtues and your good works, which serve as clothes for you, and which you no longer hold onto since property is banished, spreads out everywhere, like a sweet smelling incense. (Chapter 4, Verse 11)

As the peel is the least part of the pomegranate, which encloses all its goodness in self; so is that which appears on the outside of the soul of this degree very little, compared to what is hidden. The inside of full of the purest charity, and the most guarded graces, yet covered by a very common exterior: for God takes pleasure in hiding the souls that he wants for himself: men are not worthy of knowing them; and the Angels admire and respect them, although under the most simple exterior in the world: So that those who judge only according to appearance would believe them to be the most common, even though they are the delights of God. They are not like those who sparkle in the world [One saw above (See Ecstasy Numbers 1, 11, 17) that these souls having been guided by faith, are above these gifts, being consummated in God in these same gifts.] either with miracles, or with extraordinary gifts: all that is too little for them. God saves them for himself; and he is so jealous with them, that he does not expose them to the eyes of men; on the contrary he seals them with his seal, as he himself says, that his Wife is [Canticle (or Songs of Solomon) 4:12] the sealed fountain, of which he is himself the seal. But why does he keep it sealed? It is because [Songs of Solomon (or Canticle) 8:6] love is strong like death, and jealousy hard like Hell. O that this may express well what I am putting forth! For as death takes away everything from whomever it holds; so does love extract everything from the soul, and hides it in the privacy of a living sepulcher. The jealousy of God is hard like hell; in that there is nothing that he will not do in order to fully possess his Wives.

One will rise as an objection to me that this soul is not so hidden, since it helps its neighbor. But I respond that this is what covers it with objection the most, God making use of that in order to make it more contemptible, because of the contradictions that it must endure. It is true that those who address themselves to it, and who are in a state to receive some share of the grace which is in this soul, feel the effects of it. (Chapter 6, Verse 6)

Your belly, that is to say, your spiritual fertility, is like the stack of wheat, so abundant is it; it plants, grows, bears fruit and feeds like the stack, and it has all the qualities of it: but it is surrounded by lilies as the mark of entire purity. [An entire and exquisite purity is always marked, which shows how much one is removed from the abominable feelings of certain created beings.]

You have made your Wife fertile and the mother of countless people. You have committed your Angels to guard her, and she reaps a great profit for you, o God, and for the soul itself. (Chapter 8, Verse 11)

## AUTHORITIES

There is little to cite here, because I put almost all in the article on Communications.

### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

1. When minds are equal, they enlighten each other, they weigh and understand each other luminously in savory and delectable impression on their exits and, to say it better, on their manifestations; in so far as equal to equal the concepts are not called exits, but a manifestation of lights and truths; which touching with self the subject which receives it, in the same instant enters into its understanding and its reason, and affects it with a vivid, penetrating, wide, savory and delicious impression. These truths are not like those which are infused, although they are not without affecting and enlightening reason, more than without flavor and delights; but this is not in comparison with the internal purely infused manifestations which flow simply from one subject into another, such as they are received from God, source of all light and truth. Nevertheless nothing of this [He means that when the heart is not disposed, some hindrance to this infusion is felt, either mutual from equal to equal, or from superior to inferior. One writes that St. Francis of Assissi and St. Clair communicated with each other in this way in their mutual contemplation. These communications are of such a great purity that the slightest thing tarnishes and stops them. It is difficult to be understood when one speaks about and explains these things, unless one has experience with them. This is what Our Lord said to his Apostles (Luke 10:6); if there is no son of peace, your peace will return to you: and in speaking about the hemorrhage (Luke 8:45-46): who touched me; I felt a secret virtue go out from me.] must thwart the simplicity of the depths, from however far away that may be; for otherwise one would feel obstacles and hindrances for the liberty of the heart and for the free introversion of the bottom: which would be very far from being attached to God, since the separation and obstacle are similar between the two: Therefore it is true that whoever during his action feels divided and multiplied in himself through the attraction of species drawn to him and which are an impression in him, is neither simple, unique, pure, nor abstract, for having again received the vivid touches and operations of God in his high and low powers. All that being thus, the simple ebb of the true spiritual being certainly often deduced only generally, it can enter neither into the reason nor the understanding of whoever is not spirit; for having not experience any taste of the spirit, he cannot receive it in order to be affected and touched by it: in such a way that the flux which has come forth from the spiritual remains without effect on the outside: but it once again affects the spirit of the subject from which it had come forth, by remaining inside. –

To return to my subject, I say that the spiritual man must be careful in producing evil in connection with this matter; so that he may not be hindered in his naked and free introversion and contemplation of God in whose fruition he takes his rest in the abyss itself of his own depths. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 7)

2. Supreme [He is speaking of the discretion of spirits.] discretion and renunciation walk with each other in equal steps, and are the height of all holiness, either in deaths, or outside of deaths. This discretion is proper and different for each one of those who are sovereignly enlightened, depending on whether they are [All the soul of a same degree no longer distinguish each other in God.] equal in unity and simplicity, not other than personally distinct in equally equal unity and simplicity, without distinction until it [He calls it coming forth into evidence of unity, because the people of the same grace, without ever having seen each other have the same feelings and lights; which appears through the conformity of their expressions. Those who surpass the others in degrees, surpass them in expressions, and in the depths everything is reduced to the same: because it is the same experience in everyone, although led by different methods up to the term: but when they have arrived there and are lost in God, they have a unity of experience and of expressions, although with a wide range: because the experience of God in us is as different as our faces; the experience of God in God is forever and everywhere the same.] comes forth in evidence of unity and in unique distinction, in order to draw away, ravish and suppress all distinct property in self, which is perfectly achieved as soon as perceivable.

This supreme discretion judges everything outside its subject: but [What he means is that these souls which are so fitting to advise them others and make up their minds, cannot make up their own minds in little things; God through this wanting their exterior, like Jesus Christ about which it is written (Luke 2:51) that it was submissive, to be subject to obedience. When God removes all human help from them, they are not any more decided in an anticipated manner; but the divine moment of necessary occurrences and encounters determines them without it being possible for them to do it

by anticipation. I believe that what does this is, that as these souls are on the inside used to a continual dependence on grace, and on the outside used to a blind obedience for those who lead them, they have lost all personal conduct; the spirit besides destitute of all reasoning and reflection contributes to this. It is not the same for matters of consequence, or when it deals with deciding the others, because what is proposed to them with simplicity is received from the Lord without anything on their part; and then God inclines the heart to respond: the first thing that he puts in their minds, they say simply; if God gives them nothing, they say it the same, adding nothing of their own, although often good natural sense can make a response be made very just. This is what makes them no longer take the time to pray for that like formerly, or like the souls of another do: because as God keeps them always empty of themselves and of all things, in the actual moment he gives them what he wants them to respond; after which they think no more about it: and if they wanted to refresh their memory in order to pray for that, unless God himself puts the thing back in their minds, they will find no correspondence to their prayer, which is as if outside of working; in such a way that they are constrained to leave everything: but when God himself presents the thing, it is done with a great interior correspondence.] but it does not always and everywhere judge the things, which concern its own subject. It [This is what in many places I called true wisdom, because through the loss that the soul certainly wanted to make of its own wisdom, it has re-clothed in the Wisdom, Jesus Christ: for when the old-man is dead, and we are renewed in newness of life in Jesus Christ, he is our life on the inside and our clothing on the outside. But as through the evacuation of our life we had to make a place for the life of Jesus Christ in us, so through the loss of all our personal clothes must we give room for Jesus Christ to reclothe us in himself. Then it is the Wisdom, Jesus Christ, which acts on the outside, because the same Jesus Christ lives on the inside.] always sees everything, it discerns everything in its depths. It considers the smallest things as much as the greatest, and it thinks of nothing as small. Everything is almost equal for it, and it has equal depth everywhere and in everything, which is presented to it, in order to see it and judge it as much in its depths as in its circumstances. But as for the regard for the things, which are of importance to its own subject, small or mediocre, this discretion must not judge. According to this truth, the less the things, which are presented, are of importance to its own subject, the less must it judge them. But it is not thus for things of great importance; for the more they are important to its own subject, the more capable it is of seeing them, discerning and judging perfectly. The reason is that at this time it is in excess of simple light and without passion, exceeding the common feelings in it for everything, or to say it better, the sights and perceptions, which seem to be only mixed feelings. From where it comes that then as it is elevated in excess of simple light, not in the least bent back upon or mixed with sense, as we said, it definitely judges some things more important to its subject, even insisting in that on the meeting of all its equals, who are at that moment inept to judge the opposite. That happens thus, because they are in the pure feeling of the thing of which it is a question; which sentiment one needs to have exceeded; without being, his simple equals in the matter of such discretion, they must yield to the judgment of he who they see insisting against them.

I add still another circumstance to this rule, namely that if someone seems to require the advice and the judgment of the sovereignly enlightened and if he simply proposes the thing to them only half-heartedly and as a matter of form, not determinedly and expressively asking for advice on it: I say that the person proposing cannot and must not rest his judgment on the resolution that he receive from these enlightened people about what he proposed to them. Then they cannot give any resolutions, in so far as they know well that one does definitely require that from them.

The very simple depths of this very vast, very consummated, very simple and luminous discretion belongs only to souls completely lost and consummated in the essence of God. There is only they who in equality of very simple consummation, can see, possess and practice it, either in stable and fixed view inside of themselves, or in spurts of the same wholly ineffable sights and feelings.

Now the consummation that we are speaking about has several degrees, to arrive at the supreme fullness of most simple simplicity in sur-eminence of super extended elevation; in which the soul being entirely engulfed, knows almost nothing any more about the consummating degrees, except by noticing them and judging for the souls which are consummated through them. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 2, Chapter 6, Numbers 11-14)

3. There are two kinds of fertility, namely one which is in pure luminous feelings productively dilated by its facile action, and this fertility is often encountered in the consummating degrees.

[Communications Section 2, Number 9] The other is a fertility of light, which is in consummation of consummated plenitude and this fertility go forth fecundly to everything, pouring it very simple light into its equals, as much as it wants in a manner of speaking. About which one must know that the consummation of plenitude is not perfect if one has not arrived at this fertility: for one can tell only at the entrance of this consummation, if this fertility is powerful enough to exit: considering that the soul itself and feeling simple and extended on the inside in God more than ever, it would certainly like to never leave; besides not having the power to do so, because of its great simplicity simplifying all fertility.

One must therefore believe that the consummation of this aforementioned unity and its supreme fullness must be the fertility of the same unity.

For in this way that the unity of Divine Nature is not without fertility, so can one not be entirely consummated in this unity, which is nothing other than the divine one, in fertility of the same unity. Now as the fertility in Divine Nature, is nothing other than the knowledge and comprehension that it has of self; in this same unity, the fertility is nothing other

than the ineffable comprehension of the immense exit from this unity. It is here that fecundity and unity are only one, and which has not arrived there, can have only the single sense touched by all that, having nothing there, which falls under purely human comprehension. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 2, Chapter 6, Number 15)

4. Now the great and supreme likeness that you have with my Divine Nature, makes this contentment seem to not flow from these two subjects into each other through active and reflexive rebounding; because, I say, of the supreme union which is between us both wholly essential and singular: Union which is made unique from us both in the unity [He means that we are one and multiplied without going forth from the unity, fertile without being placed apart from the simplicity, since this is in the simplicity itself.] itself of the very holy and very simple active fertility, in order to from this one return into the total enjoyment of the simple, fertile and unique.

Which through the same effect of loving and complex reaction, flow back from all self into the love [In order to conceive of this one must understand that God makes the love of the creature equal to self when having destroyed its own love in it, he communicates his love to it, so that it loves him with his own love; and as God loves the soul which the same love with which he loves himself, being related to him alone; he loves himself in this creature with this same love and gives it to love him by this same love, being related to him alone as an object and end. And it is in this consummation of unique love that he makes it fertile in him with his fertility; for this fertility is love. It is properly a flowing out of this same love to the outside: for as love always wants to communicate itself, it is communicated equally through itself and through the consummated subjects in it through consummated love, and love is consummated as long as it is returned into its end, but it is not consummated as for its expanse, because it grows at every moment until the end of life. This is what I called sharing in the commerce of the very holy Trinity: because God is fertile inside of himself and outside in his creatures, he communicates this double fertility to the soul. The soul, which has arrived in its end, ceases all self-advancement and walking; but there is advancement into God infinitely.] of the very simple unique; which makes simple unity, simple love, simple delights and simple repose: which suffices for both to be blessed through their mutual contemplation and through their mutual embraces uniquely felt and equally possessed. (Soliloquy 6, Chapter 6)

5. There where faith, hope and charity are no longer in perceptibly formed dead, each man is lost in the very pure region of all the simple. There the light is ineffably ineffable, and all the powers are one same thing; in such a way that having there neither bottom nor anything else it is there that the mutual and contemplative enjoyment comes about in the fertility and beyond the fertility, in the simple unique suessential, which goes about ravishing everything in self, in the fruitful repose appropriate to the unique essence; there where through this eternal act all personal fertility is refused. Whoever is deeply lost in this abyss always sinks in more inside there; which continually ravishes each man in self, and makes him no longer able to ever resolve himself to turn himself ever so little toward the creature, always going about submerging himself and sinking more and more into the Infinite Good of his Sur-essence. Here nothing is anymore, or is made more humanly; the Simple alone is living there through him and for himself, in all the order of the success of present life. I am not explaining myself more about this, I am disgusted with explaining. (*On the Effusion of Man outside of God* Treatise 3, Number 5)

#### MONSIEUR OLIER

6. I learned from your last letter the pain that you have suffered from the reading of one of mine. This grieved me much, having no intention, other than to make known to you the marvelous operation of God in our souls; which keep them in such a union, that their feelings are common in whatever removal from places where they find themselves. Whatever fidelity of God's, he wants to keep the soul always open and sensitive to him who in which he will always live for you, as he promised you. This grace is unparalleled, and it seems very singular to me and for you and for me, completely unworthy and miserable like I am. And very far from causing a bad effect in me, something that grace uncovers for me, it can only augment the care and the charity of Jesus Christ for you, which Our Lord permits me to feel in myself with an immobile and eternal nature, in accordance with what he expressed through the Prophet [Jeremiah 31:3]: *Charitate perpetua dilexi te; I love you with eternal love.* – And when I cease to be in this world, I will not cease to be completely yours in Jesus Christ, who is in heaven like on earth; and from the being as much as Charity and the spirit of Unity can perform it in those that he binds in the communion of his divine life, and that he unites for the glory and for the work of his Father. – This is what makes the perfect communion of the life of the Wife to the Husband. Also since the time that you took up this resolution, I can assure you of a renewal of admirable union, and that one cannot understand which happened between us in the purity and holiness of the Spirit. And the divine Mother of charity told me again lately, speaking to me about you, and giving me a view of unity and common loss in divine charity: You will never be separated. (Letter 10)

## SECTION 22 ENGAGEMENT

### CANTICLE

It is true that in the beginnings this embrace of the right hand is indeed the engagement of the soul, but not yet the marriage. He will embrace me, it says, first he will bind me to him through the bounds of engagement, which makes me hope that he will honor me a day of marriage, and it is then that he will embrace me and bind me so strongly to him, that I will no longer fear any failings. (Chapter 2, Verse 6)

The soul is this gentle embrace of engagement goes to sleep in mystic slumber; where it tastes a sacred repose that it had never tasted. (Chapter 2, Verse 7)

The engagement or mutual promises comes about in the union of the powers, when the soul gives itself completely to its God, and when its God gives himself completely to it with plans to admit it into his union: it is there an accord and a reciprocal promise. But alas, there is still road to travel and much to suffer, before this so desired union is accorded and consummated! –

If some Saints, or some Authors have established this divine marriage in states less advanced than the one I describe; it is that they took the engagement as marriage, and marriage for consummation; and that speaking with the liberty of the spirit, they did always exactly distinguish these degrees, just as one often attributes the divine union to states which are only the first steps of the interior path. All the souls who had the favor of the engagement believe themselves Wives all the more because the Husband himself treats them with this name. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. TERESA

1. It seems to me that this union does not achieve the spiritual marriage, but [That this here is only yet the engagement.] that it is like here below, when two people must be married: one sees that there is conformity between the two parts, that mutually they value each other, and that they see each other so that they may be more satisfied with each other; the same way here, supposing that the accord is already made, and that the soul is well informed of the advantage which fails to it be such a dignity, and that it is well resolved in everything to perform the will of its Husband, his Majesty knowing well the truth of that, remains content with the soul and is merciful to it by wanting it to know it, and that, as one usually says, they come to the interview, and thus he unites it with self. (Chat. Dem. V, Chapter 4)

2. The spiritual engagement is different, in so far as in this state one is often enough separated and even the union is different; for even though the union may be the conjunction of two things in one, nevertheless they can always be separated and each thing can remain and subsist separated from the other, as we see that this grace of Our Lord passes promptly. (Dem. VII, Chapter 2)

3. (Center of the Soul, Number 13): The marriage of the soul with God is at the center and the engagement only in the superior part, that is to say the middle part, preferring the center to the other parts. (from St. Teresa) (Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 9, Section 1)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

4. Before explaining these Couplets, to understand them better and those that follow, one must know that in this spiritual flight that we just told about a high state and union of love is indicated to us, where after a great spiritual exercise, God is accustomed to placing the soul; which state is called spiritual engagement with the Word Son of God: and at the beginning that this comes about that is to say the first time, God communicates great things from self to the soul, embellishing it with grandeur and Majesty, and ordering it gifts and virtues and clothing it in the knowledge and honor of God, like a fiancée the day of her engagement. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 14)

5. The Wife in this Couplet reports how the two parts delivered themselves to each other mutually in this spiritual engagement, saying that in this interior cave they are joined and united in communication of love; God already freely giving her the womb of his love, where he teaches her the Wisdom of secret things; and her delivering herself completely to him, without saving anything for self or for the others, already assuring she would be his forever. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 19)

6. (See Transformation, Number 16): The soul having going outside of everything, -- transforms itself into God, who is he who is called garden, for the sweet and delectable place that the soul finds in him. (Spiritual Fertility, Number 6) Now one does not reach this garden of full transformation, which is already joy, delight and glory of spiritual marriage, without passing first through the engagement, and through the loyal and communal love of fiancés: all the more after the soul has been engaged for some time in a whole and sweet love with the Son of God, after the same Lord calls it and puts in this flowery garden to consummate with him this most happy state of marriage, where such a union of the two natures is made, and such a communication of the divine to the human is made, that neither one changing its beings, each seems to be God; although during this life this cannot exist perfectly, although this may be above all that one can say and think. – It enjoys a delight of the Glory of God in the substance of the soul already transformed in him. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 28)

SECTION 23  
NAKED AND DARK (OBSURE) FAITH. SACRED DARKNESS

CANTICLE

There are people, who say that this union can come about only in the other life: but I hold as certain that it can come about in this one; with this difference that in this life one possesses it without seeing, and in the other life one sees what one possesses.

Now I say that even though the sight of God may be an advantage of the glory which is necessary for its consummation; it is nevertheless not the essential beatitude; since one is happy as soon as one possesses the Sovereign Good, and since one can enjoy and possess it without seeing it. One enjoys it here in the night of faith, where one has the happiness of the enjoyment without having the pleasure of sight; where as in the other life one will have the clear vision of God with the happiness to possess him. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

Why does the Wife ask to not be watched in her blackness? It is that the soul starting to enter into the state of faith and stripping of the sentient graces, it little by little loses this gentle vigor, which was making it practice the good with facility. (Chapter 1, Verse 5)

Until the day of the new life, that you must receive in my Father, beings to appear and until the shadows which are keeping you in the darkness of the most naked faith, may fall and dissipate, I will go forth onto the mountain of myrrh; because you will no longer find me but in bitterness and in the cross. (Chapter 4, Verse 6)

Make me hear your voice; the friends are listening. Through these words the Husband asks his Wife with respect to him to come out of this deep silence in which she has been until then: for in the time [In all the Writings this state of faith, either of naked faith, or of savory faith is spoken about; for I thus called a jumbled and general taste, a savory experience of God without distinction of attributes. I named naked and dark faith all the time of purification, where this faith having no more either light or heat, is very painful for the soul; not that it is darker in itself: but it is because of the impurity of the creature who like an owl, or a sick eye, could not carry its flash; in such a way that God beatific light, is an infinite torment to the proprietary soul soiled with stains. This faith is therefore very dark because nothing is distinguished in its favor and because it makes it close its eyes, it's light being unbearable to them. There is a very large relation between this state and that of nakedness of this by purification. I am not speaking about the faith infused at baptism, every Christian has it; but about that spirit of faith which makes up the interior, even though it is the same faith in its nature, but different in its effects, and in that this one is never without charity: it is this faith, fruit of the Holy Spirit that I believe.] of faith and loss in God she has been in great silence, because it was necessary to reduce her depths to the simplicity and the unity of God alone. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. God is called Word or reason by the holy Scriptures [John 1:1], not only because it is he who furnishes all reason, understanding and sapience (knowledge), but also because in himself he uniformly anticipated the causes of all things, and because he passes and penetrates through everything, reaching the end and last extremities of all things, as the holy word says [Wisdom 7:24 and 8:1]: and before all that again, it is [Simplicity Number 5] because divine reason is more simple than all simplicity, and because it is free and extricated from all things in a way which surmounts and surpasses all beings. This Word is a simple truth which is truly such, [A simple faith must unite us to simple truth; True faith is always simple above reasoning, either the common and general kind with regards to all truth of self, or simple faith or the spirit of faith which makes up the true interior, and which is the means of union with God.] around which like if from a pure and infallible knowledge of all things, the divine faith and solid assurance of those who believed consists; which finds and establishes them in the truth, and the truth itself in them, by a similarity of belief, from which it is not possible to dissuade them, in that those who believed, have a simple knowledge of the truth.

For if it is true that knowledge unites and conjoins together those who know and the objects which are known, and if on the contrary ignorance is always the cause of making the ignorant change and be divided in himself; certainly according to the holy word whoever believes in truth, will never be able to be moved [Stability of common faith which does not vary: stability of the gift or of the spirit of simple faith which no longer varies.] outside of this firm domicile where he is established through true faith, in which he will have consistency and perseverance in the immobile and immutable truth of what he believes. For he who is united to the truth, [What is said about common faith is found to be very true, and in the same way in the interior spirit of faith.] is assured by certain learning that he is good, even though one wanted to demonstrate the opposite to him and make him believe, that he had lost the spirit and had become mad and insane. It is indeed true that those who see him, as one can certainly think, do not know that through true faith he departed from error, and he passes into the side of truth. But he himself knows very well that he is neither crazy, nor



out of this mind, like they say, but that through the truth, which is simple [One needs simple faith in order to have simple truth. Just as he who has true faith for Religion, no longer hesitates on any points of the same religion: so does he who is established in the spirit of faith, no longer vary, seek nothing doubt nothing; because the will follows this spirit of faith, so that it, as well as the spirit, is in perfect repose: And this is the difference which is encountered between common faith and the spirit of faith, with the pure faith of common belief, the will is often very disordered; but it is not the same way with the spirit of faith or the gift of faith which makes up the interior: the will is so united with it that it fixes the will or makes it invariable. It is that this faith is always accompanied by wisdom or savory learning which determines the will in the same object without object that faith embraces. The interior spirit of faith is the proper character of the Christian and his perfection.] and always of the same kind, he is released and delivered from the inconsistent and variable movement, which was bringing him to error and the full lie of mixture and variety. This is also how the principle Masters of our divine sapience die each day for the defense of the truth, in order to bear witness, as it is only right, and by effect and by words, that the learning and the knowledge that Christians have of the truth, is the most simple and most divine of all the truths, or to speak still more divinely, that it is the only true, unique and simple knowledge of God. (*Divine Names* Chapter 7)

2. O Trinity which is above and more than being, above and more than Divinity, above and more than goodness, which is the superintendent and the director of the divine Sapience of Christians, lead us [Admirable qualities of Mystic Theology.] to the higher and more sovereign peak of Mystic Writings, which is above all ignorance and above all light, and in which the simple, absolute and immutable mysteries of Theology are hidden and kept secret in the more than very clear darkness of silence which teaches the mystic and secret subjects: and which lights up and makes shine that which is very luminous in the very dim darkness; and in what can neither be seen nor touched, fills the understandings to the top with more than very beautiful shining lightness [Admirable passage; for in order to walk in faith one must not make use of the sight of the mind; it creates obstacles to this savory learning or divine wisdom.] which understandings do not make use of sight. As for me, this is the prayer that I make.

3. But as for you, O Timothy, apply yourself strongly and without letting go to mystic speculations, and release [According to this discourse one can prepare oneself for the divine union through continual renouncement. One begins by quitting all things, by approaching one's center one leaves everything which is on the outside; following which one passes beyond and leaves oneself.] the senses and the operations of understanding, all sensory and intelligible things, all those things which are and those who are not; and in an unknown way elevate yourself as much as you are permitted, to the union of he who is above all essence and knowledge. [Joy of the Soul Number 1] For by means of this pure, free, entire and absolute departure outside of yourself and all things, and after you have quit everything, and have unbound and extricated yourself from all things, you will be elevated to the suressential ray of divine darkness.

But be on close guard that not one of those who are not initiated into our divine mysteries listens to what is said. I mean those who are still attached to the creatures, and who do not think that there is anything more excellent or above all that is in nature; and who by the force of their natural knowledge consider themselves able to understand and know he who make his retreat and hid himself in the darkness. If the divine doctrine of our mysteries is above the reach and the capacity of them, what will we say about the others who are more ignorant and uncouth imagine and figure this first cause, which is, elevated above all things, through the lowest and vilest things, which are in nature? (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 1)

4. It was in this way that the divine Bartelemy says that Theology was extremely big and extremely small, the Gospels were extremely ample and great, and yet again extremely short and succinct: wanting, in my opinion, to give to understand excellently by these words, that this good cause could be expressed with many and with few words, indeed even without words, like that of which there is neither word nor thought, in that it is excellently and sur-essentially above all things, and is made to be seen in truth and uncovered wholly naked, for those alone who pass and penetrate above all that is impure and what is pure, and who ascend [How can one be elevated where one cannot climb? It is by letting oneself be attracted by a powerful arm; or by becoming, through the loss of self, like an imperceptible vapor that the Sun attracts and purifies, and where finally it imprints itself having made it share in its qualities.] above all holy heights where it is impossible to ascend, and who leave all the divine lights, all sounds and heavenly words behind self, and who are engulfed in this gloomy darkness, where truly is he who, as the Holy Scriptures says, is beyond all things.

For the highest and most divine things of those which can be understood by sight or hearing, are only certain reasons and notions of things which are under he who surpasses everything, through which [Presence of God in the soul, which is the sanctuary of God.] his presence which is above all notions and thought, is demonstrated, which walks and passes over the top of the most holy summit of the most holy places. Then the spirit is rid and extricated of all the things which see and which are seen, and [Quietude Section 8, Number 4] is engulfed in this truly mystic fog of ignorance; there where it closes and shuts all the apprehensions of knowledge, and finds itself in he who can be neither touched nor seen, being entirely of [Life of the soul in God after the loss.] he who is beyond all things, without being any longer of

anything else, or of himself, or of any body else: but by repose and by making all knowledge stop, he is united [Union in the sacred repose of faith.] to he who is entirely unknown; and knowing nothing, he knows only the knowledge which is appropriate to his understanding. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 1)

5. Now that we are going to enter into this dim fog, which is, above all understands, we will find there not only a shortening of words, but also an entire deprivation of words and thoughts. For it is certainly true that in our previous treatises, our discourse coming to descend from the high to the low, in proportion to its descent, is extended to a convenient width. But now that it goes ascending from low to high in proportion to its elevation, it is restrained and shortened, and when it has passed all which are ascended, it will become [Interior silence, disposition for the union.] entirely mute, and will be wholly united with he who cannot be explained or declared by discourse. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 3)

6. The darkness in God is nothing other than his inaccessible light, in which it is said [Psalms 17:12 (or 18:12 KJV)] that God makes his residence. And although it may be invisible because of his eminent clarity, and although it may be inaccessible because of the excessive grandeur of the supernatural light which comes forth from it, nevertheless whoever is honored with the knowledge and the sight of God, is essentially in it; and through that itself that he neither sees nor knows, he is truly in he who is above all sight and all knowledge, knowing only this, [True state of faith, which knows God not by distinguishing anything in him; but by knowing that he is above all knowledge.], that he is above all imperceptible and understandable things, saying with the Prophet: [Psalms 138:6 (or 139:6 KJV)] Your knowledge made me an admirer, it grew stronger and I will never be able to attain it. Just as the divine Paul talks of having known God, having known that he is above all intelligence and knowledge. This is the reason why he says [Romans 11:33] that his ways are impenetrable, and that his judgments cannot be deepened; and that his peace [Philippians 4:7 Divine peace which results from this state of faith.] sur-passes all understanding, and that his graces cannot be told, as having found [One therefore enjoys God here in the night of faith.] he who is above all things, and knowing that above his knowledge, that he is above all things because he is the author and the cause of all things. (Epistle 5)

#### HARPHIUS

7. In the contemplation of this dark cloud, that reason cannot understand, the spirit dies to itself and lives in God, and it becomes one same thing with God without distinction; and there God is its peace, its repose and its enjoyment. (*Mystic Theology* Book 2, Chapter 62)

8. When through the force of love the soul has been elevated above all image and all likeness, in order to enter into the dark nothingness of its thought, God becomes present to it without surroundings, according to all that he is. (*Mystic Theology* Book 3, Chapter 24)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

9. This light is a pure, simple, naked and habitual faith, helped by reason, ratified and confirmed by experience, which is not subject to the senses or to any dealings or commerce with them, since even it is contrary to them, and has its residence in the summit of the soul, where it contemplates God without any means or space between.

I call this faith pure, in order to exclude the help of the senses, so much that in vain does one look for their support, or their assurance, since one must surrender them totally: First, because one cannot always have the aid of sensory devotion; but this faith must always remain. Secondly, because when one possesses it, it is not secure, but uncertain and irresolute; but this faith must be stable. And not only must one totally renounce the senses, but also annihilate them totally, because the senses are false and liars, and persuade us that the things are; but on the contrary this faith is true and annihilates them. The senses, which would make us live in them, are dark; but on the contrary this faith, which makes us live in spirit, is luminous.

Secondly, I call it simple in order to exclude all multiplicity of reasoning, as very contrary to this purity of faith: (1) because it makes it human; but it must be divine: (2) because it causes acts to be performed and consequently causes being and not annihilation: (3) it brings space and images between God and the soul.

Thirdly, I say habitual, where there is great reason to notice, that it must be continual without any intermission or respite, in order to thus have this abyss of Nothing and Everything without interruption: for yet even though that seems difficult, one can nevertheless put it in practice; - just as the Angel which is on earth remains nevertheless in Heaven because of the habit that he has of being in his place in Heaven; in the same way still even though this light and this faith do not actually see this Nothing and this Everything, it does however see them in some manner by this habit that it has of seeing them. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 13)

## THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

10. We can say about the soul which goes through there, that it walks unknown and hidden from the Devil. That is why it says that it went forth to the dark in assurance; because he who is so happy to be able to walk in the darkness of faith, taking it as a guide, quitting all the natural imaginations and spiritual reasons, walks very confidently. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 1)

11. The night of faith belongs to the superior part of man, which is the rational part it is consequently darker and more interior; in that it deprives it of rational light, or to say it better blinds it. And thus it is compared well to midnight, which is the most intimate and darkest part of the night. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Chapter 2)

12. Faith, say the Theologians, is a dark but certain habit of the soul; and the reason why it is a dark habit, is because it makes truths revealed by the same God be believed, which truths are above all natural light and which surpass all human understanding. From where it comes that this excessive light of the faith which is given to the soul, is a dim darkness for it; because the more [It is in this way that the three Theological virtues surmount the three powers of our soul and lose them in themselves.] surmounts the less and deprives us of it; just as the light of the sun eclipses all the other lights in such a way that their light does not appears when the sun is shining.

So is Faith figured out by this cloud which separated the children of Israel from the Egyptians, being on the point of entering into the Red Sea: about which Scripture says [Exodus 14:20] that it was a dark cloud which lit up the night. It is a wonderful thing that being dark it lit up the night, to make it understood that faith which is an obscure and dark cloud for the soul, [and which is also a night, since in the presence of faith the soul remains deprived and blinded of its natural light] with its darkness lights up and gives light to the darkness of the soul, so that thus the master is similar to the disciple. For the man who is in darkness can properly be illuminated only by another darkness, as the Psalmist teaches, saying; [Psalms 18:2 (or 19:2 KJV)] The day announces the word to the day, and the night teaches the night which succeeds it: which is to [Admirable] the day which is God in beatitude, where it is already day, communicates and reveals to the blessed Angels and to the souls, which are also a day, his divine Word, which is his Son, so that they know it and enjoy it: And the night, which is faith in the Church, where it is still night, shows the learning to the Church, and consequently to any soul; which is one night, seeing that it does not yet enjoy clear and beatific wisdom, and in the presence of faith it is like a blind person deprived of his natural light. In such a manner that what must be concluded from this, is that faith, which is a dark night, gives light to the soul which is in darkness; and what David said is verified: [Psalms 138:11 (or 139:11 KJV)] Night will be my illumination in my delights, like who would say; in the pleasures of my pure contemplation and union with God, the night of faith will serve as guide for me, giving to mean that the soul must be in darkness in order to have light and be able to walk their path. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 3)

13. As one sees in Job, where Scripture says, that [Job 38:1 & 40:1] God spoke to him in the dark air; which designated the darkness of faith, where Divinity is covered when it communicates itself to the soul; which will finish [I Corinthians 13:12] when that which is partial passes away, namely the darkness of faith; and that which is perfect will come, namely divine light. We have an impression of that in [Judges 7:16] Gideon. Faith, which is represented by these pots, contains the divine light in self, which being accomplished and broken by the end and rupture of this mortal life, instantly will appear the light and the glory of Divinity. It is then clear and evident that the soul, in order to be united to God in this life, and to communicate immediately with him needs to unite itself with darkness. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 9)

14. [The souls which are led by faith, have none of these things; because God removes all the distinct from them, opposed to the same faith, as one could see. It is good to explain here, how the souls which have arrived in God, without going forth from God sometimes have distinct things, or at least they appear such to the others. If they say something about the future, it is only like simple thoughts that they say by fidelity and which come at the moment; at which they do not stop themselves, being only the accessory, and they do not want one to be amused by it or stopped there. God usually gives them [that not for themselves], but to be evidence to the souls that they are helping, and which are still weak: and they have nothing of that for the strong souls already strengthened in faith. That is done without anything extraordinary and comes from the simple depths without anything exterior. They are as happy if what they say does not happen as if it happens; that is why they say it without precaution and without mystery. The same God, who places this simple thought in them, moves them in their depths to say it. These thoughts are all the surer because their mind is simplified, and is not jumbled by imagination or fantasy; and these things are said more for the interior than for the exterior. If they say to a troubled soul; Be at peace: it is immediately put in calm; which has been felt many times, provided nevertheless that the person is not opposed to that; for this grace is so delicate that it wants the disposition in the subject. One single word, as would be: O I will not be at peace; the slightest doubt stops the effect. This is what Jesus Christ said to his Apostles [Luke 10:6]; Your peace will return to you if there is no son of peace: For the soul immediately feels it if the grace did not have its effect, because of the thought or the word of the person to whom was said; Be at peace. But when the word has its effect, what Jesus Christ said is felt, [Luke 8:46] I feel that a secret virtue

has gone forth from me. The miracles of these people are without flash and are almost all interior, and the others of the souls of light are almost all exterior: those there need neither will nor consent, because they are performed on exterior things. Jesus Christ gave an example of these two manners of acting: when he revived the dead, he did it with the strength of his word without their consent; but to others that he cured, he said to them [Mark 9:23]; If you can believe; making them understand that the effect of the grace that he wanted to communicate to them, depended on their faith: then he would cure them interiorly and exteriorly. I believe that this comes from it being necessary for the effect to be in proportion to the cause, and that for what a soul operates from faith it demands the same faith in the subject. And as these souls are wholly interior, what they do is wholly interior, and happens naturally like everything: and the more natural the things appear and are said without warning, the more do they have their effect. And that is done with so much purity that God does not allow them a return, a single reflection or vain joy, as it would certainly be easy for God to these things himself rather than through someone else: this is an impurity that the soul could not bear; and God would stop and suspend this secret virtue. The simple fixed sight that one could want certain people to feel in order to be evidence to them, would be a terrible imperfection: and the soul would feel dirtied: this dirtiness is like a little fog which is lifted and immediately falls again, because the will does not adhere to that.

One must notice that the souls of faith do not have any of these things all along the path, and that they have them only in God, where the lost distinctness is returned to them in the unity without exiting this same unity; where as the other souls have these things from the beginning of their path; and if God wants to make them arrive in him, which is rare, and which happens only to very humble souls which have not stopped at these things; on the contrary which passed beyond them without stopping at them or placing any value in them; if God, I say, wants to make them reach him, he must remove these things from them, without which they would never arrive there, as was just seen by what John of the Cross said.] I saw a person who having of these successive intentions with God; among some very true and very substantial ones that he formed, he also had some false ones: and I am very astonished by what happens here at this time, which is that a soul such as this, with four grains of consideration, if it feels some of these intentions in its recollection, batiste immediately the all for one thing of God, and supposing that it is thus, saying; God told me, God answered me; and he does not leave in this way: but it is that the same souls tell themselves this the most often. And moreover the envy that they have for that and the fondness that they for it in their spirit, makes them answer themselves and think that it is God who is answering them. Which makes them fall into a great reverie if they do not keep rein, and he who governs them does not absolutely prohibit them these kinds of discourse: For they are in the custom of pulling more babble and impurity from the soul, showing humility and mortification from the spirit, already thinking great things about themselves, and that God has spoken to them, and this is little more than nothing, or nothing at all, or less than nothing; because all that does not engender humility and charity, mortification, holy simplicity and silence, what can it be? Now I say that this can turn one very much away from the path of divine union; seeing that if the soul places value in it, that distances it from the abyss of faith. – If you ask why the understanding must be deprived of these truths, since there the spirit of God enlightens it; consequently that it cannot be bad? I respond that the Holy Spirit enlightens the collected understanding, and that it enlightens it according to its recollection. And because the understanding cannot find a greater recollection than the one in faith, the Holy Spirit will not enlighten in it another thing more than in this; because the pure and more eminent the soul is in this perfection of living faith, the more does it have the infused charity of God; and the more charity it has, the more he enlightens it and communicated his gifts to it. And although some light in this illustration of truths is communicated to the soul, nevertheless it is as different from the one, which is in faith without understanding clearly, as there is to say about fine gold from the basest and most vile metal. And as for the abundance of light, there is as much to say about a difference between a drop of water and the whole sea; in that in the one in the other the wisdom of God, generally, which is the Son of God, by a simple and universal instruction, which is given to the soul in faith. If you tell me that everything is good, and that one does not hinder the other; I will tell you that it hinders a lot when the soul places value in that: this entangles it much, because it is already occupied by clear things of little importance which can prevent the communication of the abyss of faith, in which God supernaturally and secretly teaches the soul and lifts it in gifts and virtues without it knowing the manner. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 29)

15. Therefore he who has the grace and the supernatural gift, must sequester the covetousness and the joy of the exercise, of this gift: and God who favors him with this supernaturally for the use of his Church or its members, will also push him supernaturally to exercise it, how and when he must do it: for since Jesus Christ prohibited his disciples from worrying about what they were announcing or how they were talking, because it was a supernatural affair of faith; he will also want, considering that the matter is not less important, man to wait for God to be the worker touching and moving the heart, since all virtue must be operated in his virtue. – The second damage can be born from the first, namely, a loss of and detriment to faith, which can happen in two ways; one with respect to the others, because in undertaking to perform marvels or virtues outside of time and without necessity, beside which this is tempting God, which is a great sin, he might not succeed, and in this way he would breed the scorn of faith, in that although it may succeed, God allowing it for other reasons and respects, as happened to the sorcery of Saul [I Samuel 28:12] it will not always succeed, and even when he succeeds, they are failing and making themselves guilty, because they are making use of this grace when it is not appropriate. In the other way he can receive detriment in himself concerning the merit of

faith, because by putting such great store in these miracles he distances himself from the substantial exercise of faith, which is dark habit, [John of the Cross speaking about naked faith, shows throughout, that it is not founded on evidence. (See also Will of God Number 21) In order to understand this one must know that there are miracles which are performed outside of this state of simple faith, and those ones burst forth and make noise as well the visions, revelations and prophesies which belong to the same (luminous) state, and the ecstasies; and all these evidences destroy the unique and simple faith above the evidences. There are miracles without flash and without thinking of them, without preparation, which have only the present instant where they are performed without the person having thought of doing them: and those ones are in the same faith. The first were necessary in order to establish the true Religion among the infidels; they would be harmful to Christians. From where it comes that St. Louis did not want to see a miracle which was being done in the holy Eucharist; he says: I believe without seeing.] from where it comes that where there are more signs and evidence, there is less merit in believing. That is why St. Gregory [Homily 26 on Gospel] says, that faith is without merit when reason feels it humanly and palpably. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 3, Chapter 30)

16. The narrow door is this night of the sense, of which the soul is stripped in order to enter there, guiding it and governing itself by the faith which is distanced from all senses, to walk after, through the narrow path of the other night of the spirit, in which the soul enters after, setting out toward God in very pure faith, which is the means through which it unites itself with him. But because it is very narrow, dark and terrible, in such a way that there is no comparison of this night of the senses with that of the spirit, in darkness and in toil, there are certainly less people who walk there: nevertheless its profits are much greater. (*Dark Night of the Soul* Book 1, Chapter 11)

17. See Ecstasy Number 12.

18. This dark night is an influence of God in the soul, which purges it of its ignorance and its habitual, natural and spiritual imperfections; which influence the contemplatives call infused contemplation or Mystic Theology: where God teaches the soul in secret and instructs it [The soul is instructed in naked faith.] in the perfection of love, without it doing anything other than being [Passive state, this is what I called savory faith in all my writings.] lovingly attentive to God, hearing him and receiving his light, without knowing how this contemplation is infused; because it is a loving wisdom of God, which brings about particular effects in the soul, in that by purging [This is the Wisdom which purifies. *Short Method* Chapter 24, Number 4] and enlightening it, it disposes the soul for the union of love with God, where the same loving wisdom which purges the blessed Spirits illustrating them, is the one which purges the soul and enlightens it.

But the doubt is why the soul calls the divine light a dark night, seeing that, as we say, it enlightens and purges the soul of its ignorance. To which one responds that for two reasons this divine Wisdom is not darkness for the soul, but also pain and torment. The first reason, because of the height of the divine Wisdom, which exceeds the state of the soul and in this way, is darkness for it. The second is for the baseness and the impurity of the soul and in this way it is arduous, painful and also dark for it.

To prove the first, one must suppose a certain doctrine of the Philosopher, which says that the clear and more evident divine things are in themselves, the more naturally hidden they are to the soul: just as the clearer the light is, the more it shocks and blinds the pupil of the owl; and the more one watches the full sun, the more it causes darkness and deprives one of vivifying power, tiring it because of its weakness. From where it comes that when this divine light of contemplation radiates in the soul which is not yet totally illustrated, it makes spiritual darkness for the soul; because not only does it tire it, but also because it obscures it and deprives it of its natural way of understanding. That is why St. Dennis and other Mystic Theologians call this infused contemplation, ray of darkness; namely for the soul, which is neither illustrated nor purged, in that by its great supernatural light, the natural intellectual force is vanquished, and deprived of its ordinary and common way of understanding. For this reason David puts [Psalms 17:12 (or 18:12 KJV)] a cloud and darkness around God, not that this is thus in self, but only with regard to our weak understandings, which are blinded in this so immense clarity, and remain shocked, not reaching such a great height. Because for that the same Prophet says, [Psalms 17:13 (or 18:13 KJV)] that because of his splendor in his presence the storm clouds have passed, namely between God and our understanding; and this is the reason for which God hurling at the soul which is not yet transformed, this brilliant ray of his secret wisdom, causes it obscure darkness in the understanding. Now that this dark contemplation is at the arduous beginning for the soul, it is a clear and evident thing: for as this divine infused contemplation has many sovereignly good excellent qualities, that the soul which receives them has much misery, [Causes of the purgative pains.] from there comes that two opposites not being able to subsist in one same subject, by necessity the soul must grieve and suffer, in which is the subject where these two opposites are found, battling and fighting each other, because of the purgation of the faults and imperfections of the soul, which is done by this contemplation. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 5)

19. The soul is therefore well hidden and under cover of this dark water which is around God; for as it serves as tabernacle and residence for God himself it will also serve as a perfect rampart for him with perfect security although in darkness, where it is hidden and guaranteed of itself and of all the other damages of the creatures, as we said; because

from such souls one can also understand this verse from David: [Psalms 30:20 (or 31:20 KJV)] You will hide them from the trouble of men in the secret of your face: In your tabernacle you will defend them against the contradiction of tongues: where he means all kinds of protection: for to be hidden in the face of God [One is well defended against the trouble of men, when all their persecutions do not trouble the peace of the soul.] from the trouble of men, is to be fortified by this obscure contemplation against all the temptations which could come to them from men; and to be in his tabernacle with shelter from the contradiction of tongues, is to be engulfed in this dark water, which is the tabernacle, that we said, where the soul remains free from all the imperfections which contradict the spirit, as much from the flesh as from other created beings, where this soul can indeed say that it goes in darkness and in security.

There is still another reason not any less effective than the previous one to make it understood that this soul is doing well even though in darkness; it is because of the force that this obscure, arduous and dark water of God immediately puts in the soul --. For from now on the soul in self has a true determination to do nothing, which it knows to be offensive to God. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 16)

20. We can draw from there the reason for which certain people who go through this path, and who having a good and fearful soul would like to make those who govern them realize that what they have, they do not know, and cannot; and so they have much repugnance to say it, principally when the contemplative is a little more simple and the soul does not feel it in the least; For they cannot say, unless the soul is content, tranquil and satisfied, that they feel God and that in their opinion they are doing well. –

It is not the same, when the things that the soul receives are particular, like feelings, visions which as ordinarily, they are received under some species which the senses have a part of, then they can be expressed under this species or likeness; but this power to declare it is already no longer in the terms of true contemplation, because that one can hardly be made to be understood, and that is why it is called secret. And not only for what is called secret and is such, but also because it has the property of hiding the soul in self; because besides the ordinary it sometimes absorbs the soul so much, and thrust it in such a way in its secret abyss, that it knows clearly that it remains very abandoned and distanced from every creature, in such a way that it seems to it that it is placed in a deep and very spacious solitude where no human creature can reach, and as if in an immense desert, which is not bounded by any place, all the more delectable, savory [Dark but savory faith, different from the naked and purifying faith.] and lovable, because it is deeper, more vast and more solitary, where the soul sees itself all the more secret and hidden, because it sees itself raised above every temporal creature: and then this abyss of wisdom elevates and uplifts the soul so much, putting it in the veins of the science of love, that it makes it know not only that every condition of the creature is very base concerning this sovereign knowledge and divine feeling: but moreover it sees how all the terms and words about which the divine things in this life are expressed, are short, base and in some manner improper, and that it is not possible through the natural path and way, although one speaks about it the most highly and the most wisely that one can, to be able to know them and have a feeling for them as they are, if it is not through the illumination of this Mystic Theology; and so the soul seeing this truth in its illumination, which cannot be attained or even less declared in human terms, it has reason to call it secret. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 17)

21. See Faults Number 9.

22. As the soul with such a great desire wishes for the union with the Husband and it sees that it finds neither means nor remedy in all the creatures, it turns toward faith, and addresses its words to it, like to that which must give it a brighter light for its Friend, taking faith as a means for this end; in that to speak with truth, there is none other through which one arrives at the true union with God in accordance with what is said [Hosea 2:20]; I will marry you in faith. It tells it with great desire: O faith of my Husband Jesus Christ; if now you uncovered with clarity the truths of my Beloved that you infused in my soul with obscurity and darkness. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 12)

23. The Wife says that she has the truths drawn in her bowels, namely, in her soul according to the understanding and the will, because according to the understanding she has these truths infused in her soul by faith: and in that their account is not perfect, she says drawn, because as a sketch or drawing is not a perfect painting, so is the knowledge of faith not a perfect account. The truths which infuses in the soul by faith are like a sketch, but at the time of the clear vision they will be in the soul like a perfect and complete picture, following what the Apostle says; [I Corinthians 13:10] when what is perfect has come, which is the clear vision, what is partial will pass away, which is the knowledge of faith. Now in this sketch of faith there is another sketch of love in the soul of the lover, which is according to [One sees through this how the will follows faith with equal steps.] the will, in which the figure of the friend is drawn in such a manner, and is depicted in it so conjointly and so vividly when there is the union of love, that it is true to say that the friend lives in the Lover and the Lover in the friend. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 12)

24. God can certainly pour out this love and increase it without communicating or increasing the distinct comprehension: --

Which has been experienced by several spirituals, who often see themselves burn with the love of God without having an understanding more distinct than before: for they can understand little and love much, and can understand much and love little; on the contrary [Infusions Number 8] these spirituals who do not enjoy many advantages in the understanding in that which is from God, are accustomed to being advanced in the will, and infused faith is sufficient for them for the learning of understanding, on which condition God pours his charity into them and increases it for them with his action, which is to love more even though knowledge has not accrued for them; and so the will can drink love, without the understanding drinking new knowledge. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

25. When a soul has come to such a point, that it passes above all means of the creatures and the senses, and above all these ways and manners, dealing with God and enjoying him in faith and in love, then one says, that it truly profited by God, because it truly lost by all the rest. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 21)

26. Do not then say that this soul does not advance, or that it does nothing, because if the soul does not then taste other understandings more than before, it advances setting out to the supernatural. But will you say it understands nothing distinctly: on the contrary, I say that if it for that moment understood distinctly, it would not advance; in so far as God is incomprehensible, and exceeds understanding: consequently the more one continues on one's way, the more one must be distanced from oneself, walking in faith, believing and not seeing; so one approaches more closely to God, not understanding that by understanding in the aforementioned sense. And so do not pain yourself about that; for if the understanding does not turn around, wanting to employ itself in distinct accounts and other ways of understanding here below, it advances, and to advance is to walk more in faith. And as the understanding does not know how and cannot understand how God is, it goes to him not understanding; in a way that the thing for which you condemn it is useful and fitting for it, namely, that it is not embraced in distinct understandings [The path of distinct light opposed to the path of faith.], but that it walks in perfect faith. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 9)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

27. St. Bonaventure: Stand up and restore yourself without knowing anything, as much as it possible, to the union with God, that is to say, with he who is above all knowledge, which restoration or resurrection is made by the vehement desire and the fervent love of God alone; and it cannot be known by any search for reasoning. --

For ceasing the operation of knowledge in this darkness, with a burning desire for God alone perfectly unknown by he who possesses him, he is united to God alone, and knowing he sees in this darkness above the understanding; because human understanding without eyes could not succeed in knowing that; not that the understanding is said to be without eyes in order to be deprived of the power of sight, but in order to be deprived of all action of sight, when he rests in this darkness. --

Therefore the degrees of this ascension are firstly to leave all sensory things, secondly all the intelligible ones, thirdly to enter into the darkness where God appears.

There still remains the principle knowledge of God, which is indicated by Moses [Exodus 20:21 & 24:18] being separated from those who had seen the aforementioned things with him, and withdraw after the sight of those ones he enters into the darkness of ignorance. -- Man is here as if separated and sequestered from self, and by the unity of direction; which is effective of true knowledge, he is united to God intellectually unknown, and with knowledge much better than is intellectual knowledge; because by leaving the intellectual knowledge, he knows God above the understanding and the mind. (Path 5 to Eternity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

28. We must have spirits without eyes, because the spirit cannot look at the divine essence with intellectual eyes; and consequently one must withdraw them, as it is written [Canticles 6:4] turn your eyes from me because they make me take flight. Then [Which shows that there is knowledge of Jesus Christ enclosed in the state of faith above all distinction.] Jesus Christ undresses himself for our view when the spirit endeavors to look at the Wisdom from on high with intellectual eyes. -- By removing the spirit of the creatures, he must enter into the obscurity and into the ray of darkness. (On the light of the church, Sermon 11 of St. Dennis) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

29. Dennis the Carthusian: However in this contemplation one says that the peak of the mind and the summit of intelligence are united to God as if entirely unknown, and enter into an obscurity which excludes all light, [That is to say distinct light] and know nothing of him. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

30. Harphius: Through naked knowledge the soul does not cease to enter this divine obscurity, where it is put in perfect ignorance [Note: perfect ignorance] of God, being placed as if between two tables, just as if it had to die of hunger. –

So therefore it will remain seated in naked obscurity, immediately establishing its residence in front of the unknown presence of glorious Divinity. (*Mystic Theology* Book 3, Chapter 23) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

31. The Abbot Gilbert (explaining these words: In the night I looked for him that my soul cherishes.) If in order to find the Beloved the night operates, it cooperates manifestly and rightly enough; the direction leads this night. (Sermon 1 on the Canticles) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

32. Gerson: So that having renounced all things which can be felt, or imagined, or heard (understood), the spirit through love carries itself into the divine obscurity where it is united to God ineffably and sur-eminently. (*Mystic Theology*) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

33. Taulere: If God must glow inside of us in a divine manner, not only does our natural light serve no use in that; but it must even be entirely reduced to certain nothingness, and we must withdraw ourselves from everything. –

For if in this way he must know God, his learning must be reduced to a pure ignorance and a forgetting as much of oneself as of all the creatures --. There is nothing more expedient and useful of man than to put oneself in a certain obscurity and ignorance. Here when all knowledge is entirely relinquished, or rather that man is destitute of all knowledge. (Sermon of Sunday in the Octave of the Epiphany) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

34. Jesus Christ speaks thus to each to the faithful: For the love of me renounce your light, which compared to mine is a true obscurity and opposite mine, and me being the true light, I will give you for your darkness my eternal light, my joy, my beatitude, my essence and my life. (1 Sermon of the Fourth Sunday of Lent) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

35. For in this conversion, the purged spirit is plunged and absorbed into divine obscurity, and the tranquil silence and the ineffable union with Divinity: but here, namely in this immersion, all equality and inequality is removed: for in this abyss of the Divinity, the purged spirit loses itself, knowing nothing more, either about God, or about itself, or about equality or inequality, or anything else. (Sermon 1 on the feast of the Trinity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

36. Rusbroche: When we return into ourselves, or when we go back inside of ourselves, the fruitive unity of God appears there like an obscurity or like a completely incomprehensible thing. -- Even though the air may be lit with the splendor of the Sun and ever though the sight may be piercing and very intense, nevertheless if someone wants to fix his eyes on the rays which bring about this splendor, and stare at the Sun itself, the eyes will be infallibly overpowered and will lose strength in their action, and will receive the splendor of the rays only passively: in the same way also the radiating and brilliant glare of the incomprehensible light of God in the unity of our supreme powers, appears so great, and appears to us with such a vehemence, that all action must cease as long as it is of the creature and done with discretion or distinction, and as long as the soul here endures the operation of God. (*Spiritual Wedding* Book 2, Chapter 71) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

37. From this unity of God a certain simple light radiates on the interior man, being shown like an obscure nakedness and nothingness. In the obscurity man is surrounded or embraced on all sides, and losing all method, he wanders as if lost; and in the nakedness, he is deprived of all consideration and discretion for all things. (Chapter 73) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

38. St. Victor: His gentleness feels well, but the species does not notice any of it; there is still a storm cloud and some obscurity around, his throne is still in the column of the storm cloud. – Then in this state the soul can certainly feel its Beloved, but it cannot see him, and if it sees him, it sees him during the night it sees him under the storm cloud. (On the degree of violent charity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

39. Albert the Great: The soul must be raised above self and everything created and say – One cannot figure out this beloved or imagine him; but he is very perfectly desirable of the most intimate affection: he is not estimable or appreciable; but worthy of all the affection of a pure heart, because he is lovable and delectable above all, and of a goodness and infinite perfection. And then it is transported into the obscurity of the Spirit and elevated more highly inside of self, entering more deeply into itself. (*One the Attachment of God* Chapter 7) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)



40. Ambrose Florentin: When the contemplative aspires to mystic knowledge of God, leaving the images of all the corporeal and incorporeal creatures, he hides himself in a certain secret cloud, where there is marvelous ignorance; for there he loses all the aids of learning and knowledge, that is to say, the images and species on which the knowledge of man leans. (Mystic Theology) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

41. The Blessed Angela of Foligni: After that I see God in a dark obscurity and that because God is a good who surpasses all that one can think or conceive of him --. This great Good is all the more certain, because it is more surrounded by darkness: and it surpasses all things all the more, because it sees itself more in the obscurity, and it is very secret and very hidden. (Chapter 27 Consol. 7) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

42. Dom Bartelemy of the Martyrs: The soul is made suitable to contemplate the abyss of the Divinity with a serene, simple and joyous regard; and the eye of reason being shocked and dazzled by the sight of such a great light, the simple eye of the spirit acts and watches, passing above all corporeal images, resting in the single obscurity, which is the greatest light in this exile. (Spiritual Summary Part 2, Chapter 11) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

43. Picus de la Mirande: Climbing then to the fourth degree, let us enter into the light of ignorance, and blinded by the obscurity of the divine splendor, let us cry out with the Prophet; [Psalms 83:2 (or 84:2 KJV)] Lord I lost strength at the entrance to your residence. (Libr. de Ente and uno. Chapter 5) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

44. There is an indeterminate time when the happiness of love itself consists of the unhappiness of the creature, which in that lives very happy in the total of love. The order of love in love itself is as such: and from then on the creature is so deformed that it could never be found either outside or elsewhere. What am I saying? This word deformity is too little for our very base and very weak concept for being full of God it is overflowing filled in all his infinite expanse and plenitude. There nothing of it is found, and it is engulfed over all the fertility (fecundity) of the same love, which goes about leaving unity and returning to its same unity, where the soul is totally refused and flown back in the effect and in the effort of the same love. It is without a doubt the wonder of wonders that felicity [The soul is happy and unhappy all at the same time; this is a participation in the state of Jesus Christ enjoying beatitude and overwhelmed with sorrow. I have written much about it. One cannot at the same time be more happy and more miserable, more joyful and more overwhelmed with sorrow, with the enjoyment diminishing the sorrow, or the sorrow the enjoyment.] in some way full and consummated, can be with misery at the same time and in the same subject. But if uncreated Love is so close and nevertheless so far, because its infinite fullness can only be attained at an infinite distance; this life which is so sur-eminent and so lost must not be either attained or understood by what is sensory, even though elsewhere it seems very spiritual. (Mystic Cabinet Part 1, Chapter 2)

45. These depths are so admirable, so vigorous and so fertile, and most often so obscure that they can be reached by human understanding only from an infinite distance; and then human understanding feels and sees itself totally lost there within without ever wanting to come out alive; notwithstanding the distress which can come about at the beginning of this by the action of God. The Mystics call that, *paci divina in pace animae* (divine patios in peace you enliven). Of all these things do consist the sur-eminent life of the spirit, and the beatitude of the same spirit ravished in its not understood or at comprehensible Comprehender.

But there are means to enter here, which are all immediately from God. One of them however seems to have something of the human, to which the soul seems to act in some secret way; and the other is very obscure, which unrestrained by its activity ravishes the soul, which endures it, in the darkness, fog and obscurity of light, in the same sur-essential Divinity. This obscurity is made by the profound abundance of light, which dazzles the understanding; which thus dazzled watches its beatific Object obscurely and as if from far away. (Mystic Cabinet Part 1, Chapter 5)

46. One must know about this, that the best is to be of a truly affective and loving best is to be of a truly affective and loving nature, and to thus exert oneself with profound aspirations [This is the same as what is said in the Short Method (Chapter 3, Numbers 3-4 & Chapter 24, Number 8) concerning yielding one's operation to God through the path of affection.] until the soul has entirely consumed and annihilated its active forces in its Object, in the man that I think I have told above. This method is the true and sure entry to its sole repose, provided that one behaves faithfully in the various sorrows and besiegement of the soul and all its nature inside of and in the deepest part of itself, that God often makes his Wives suffer for a long time. But the largest part of this is often accompanied by luminous and delicious sights, and that happens quickly in the soul by way of very light thunder and lightning, which always manifestly show

their blessed Author. And even though this [First tests (trials)] may happen often in great sorrow and anguish, which makes itself felt in the deepest part of the spirit, nevertheless the delicious and luminous manifestations of the Husband in himself completely uncovered, makes the frequent sorrows of this degree tolerable and acceptable. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 5)

47. A learned Theologian, speaking one day to someone about the effects of the glory of the Blessed, told him, that there the Scholars would learn the subjects of their faith much more perfectly than one could here. About which the other remained very amazed, and without answering him anything in his admiration, concluded in himself, that this was true for such people and not for him; considering that his simple Object and the enjoyment of this Object, are one to him, over faith and over all learning. The reason for that is taken from the love over love [That is to say the love included and outside of God. The love in God is God. Whoever remains in charity remains in God; to remain in God is to love God in God with his own love.] in totally possessed love, or to say it better, totally possessing in imperceptible perception. [Imperceptible perception is a certain taste above all felt tastes, which cannot be explained because of its delicacy, and which is appropriate for the purified will which is dead to feelings. This method without method is nothing other than faith.] (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 9)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

48. I can draw from this that over this definition of divine faith, as long as it serves mystic prayer that it is a general knowledge of the Sovereign God without distinction of perfection or particular attributes, and which cannot be deliberate. (Book 2, Treatise 3, Chapter 2)

49. In order to understand perfectly what naked faith is, or what its nature is; one must consider how it resembles common faith, and what they differs in; because in this way one will be able to know all its properties. –

The first agreement is, that as common faith can be considered in so far as it is divine and exalted, or in so far as it is human, or only probable, naked faith can be divine, or human. In so far as divine and exalted, it has the same custom as the common one, and is infused at baptism; and in so far as it is human, it is only a belief like the patience that one takes in repose and in tranquility is an agreeable occupation and prayer to God. The second similarity is that these two beliefs have the same formal object, since it is God in so far as first truth, which cannot lie. (Book 2, Treatise 3, Chapter 4, Section 1)

50. The first difference is taken from the side of the act, in that common faith has a virtual act; the property of which, though it may not be perceivable itself, is to usually be enveloped in another which can be perceived and that one knows: as the virtual act of faith, through which an ignorant person believes what he does not know, is contained in an act of perceived faith, which is the one through which he believes what the Church believes.

The act of naked or mystic faith is enveloped in another, which is not humanly perceivable, because even though in this prayer one certainly realizes that one is resting, one does not however know in what: thus the act of this repose is simply not perceived; since the object cannot be seen, which is he who specifies this prayer. –

Naked faith has its seat at the summit of understanding; as repose has it's at the summit of the will. Common faith has its seat in the understanding; that is why even though these two kinds of beliefs are above the senses, and even above reason, mystic faith however takes its effort higher, raising itself above all perceivable operation. From which another difference follows, which is that common faith does not simplify understanding, as mystic faith does, which strips it of all thoughts. That is why it is called simple and not the common one.

A Mystic Author [Taulere: 16 Sunday after the Trinity] says, that the interior man, or he who operates without forms or images hold the same belief that everyone professes through their mouths by uttering the symbol; but what he has more than the others, is that he tastes and feels it in a more exalted fashion: and that as a six year old child and a Doctor pronouncing the same symbol, nevertheless understand it very differently; one must say the same symbol, nevertheless understand it very differently; one must say the same about a common Christian and this interior man. The former has a luminous faith is his interior, and has a clear and distinct view of it. The latter, that he calls an elevated and hidden (by Mystic Prayer) man who possesses a knowledge above light, and above all forms and images, without distinction from what he believes, in a certain dark and uniform simplicity, and with a savory experience. (Chapter 5)

51. The will operates in this Prayer in the way that we have said. Now the will cannot operate if the understanding does not enlighten it by some light, which directs it. This light is nothing other than naked Faith. (Chapter 6, Section 1) (In the whole third treatise of book 2 the Author of the Mystic Day treats of naked Faith with a great number of authorities.)

## SECTION 24 MELTING OF THE SOUL

This relates to Loss and Purification.

There will be many matters that cross over that is why I am saying so little.

### SHORT METHOD

Prayer is nothing other than warmth of love, which melts and dissolves the soul, refines it and makes it ascend up to God. In proportion to its melting it makes its scent: and this scent comes from the charity that burns it.

This is what the Wife was expressing when she said [Canticles 1:11] when my Beloved was in his bed, my nard gave off its scent. The bed is the estate of the soul. When God is there, and one knows how to remain nearby him, and remain in his presence, this presence of God melts and dissolves the hardness of the soul little by little: and by melting it creates its scent. That is why the Husband seeing that his Wife [Canticles 5:6 & 3:6] had melted in this way as soon as her Beloved had spoken, said to her: Who is she who climbs to the desert like a vapor of perfume? (Chapter 20, Number 2)

In order for gold to be usable it is not enough, that the earth is changed into gold: it is additionally necessary that fire melts and dissolves it, in order to draw from its substance all foreign and worldly parts which remain in it. (Chapter 24, Number 4)

### CANTICLE

Until the soul was completely melted in bitterness and in the cross, even though it was beautiful, it was not nevertheless completely beautiful: but since the time when it was melted under the weight of crossings and afflictions, it has been completely beautiful. (Chapter 4, Verse 7)

Nevertheless the goodness of the Husband is so great, that even though he is hiding, he does not fail to do great favors for his friends; and so much greater are they as the deprivations are longer and harder; like he did to his Wife, who found herself in a new disposition which was very advantageous for her, though she did not know it as such. It is that her soul melted and liquefied as soon as her Beloved had spoken; and that by this liquefaction she lost her hard and narrow qualities, which were preventing the consummation of the spiritual marriage. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

You are so strongly for your Beloved, that nothing may prevent you from losing yourself in him; since the time when you were completely melted by the heat of his love, you have been disposed to flowing out into him as if into your end. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

The Beloved having found his Wife disapproval completely melted and completely prepared for the consummation of the marriage, and to be received in him by permanent state. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. TERESA

1. When I wanted to write this, thinking about what the soul was doing at the time, Our Lord said these words to me; My daughter it is completely liquefying itself in order to enter more perfectly into me: it is no longer the soul which lives, but it is I who lives in it, and as it cannot understand what it hears, it is as if in hearing it were not hearing. (*Life* Chapter 18)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account

2. St. Bernard: O holy and chaste love! O gentle and sweet affection! O pure and clean intention of the will! And all the more pure and clean, because in it there remains nothing of self mixed in; all the more sweet and gentle because all that is felt there is divine! To be in this state is to be deified. As a small drop [See the *Explanation of the Canticle* Chapter 1, Verse 1) of water mixed with a large quantity of wine seems to lose itself entirely, by taking on the taste and the color of the wine; and as a red and burning piece of iron becomes exactly like the fire, being stripped of its own and first form; and as air lit up and penetrated by the light of the Sun is transformed into the same clearness of light, so that it seems to be the light itself rather than to be lit up: therefore in this state all human affection must be melted in the Saints and lose strength in an ineffable way, and through an admirable transfusion it must be entirely absorbed into the will of God; for otherwise how will God be everything in everyone if there remains in man something of man? (*On the Love of God* Chapter 10) (*Enlightenment of Mystical Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

3. See Property Number 33.

4. My heart, says [Psalms 21:15 (or 22:14 KJV)] David, speaking in the person of Our Lord on the Cross, my heart is like wax melted in my bosom. –

The heart of the Savior, true oriental pearl, uniquely unique, and priceless, cast out into the middle of a sea of incomparable bitterness on the day of its passion, melted in itself, dissolved, became undone and flowed out into sorrow, under the effort of so many mortal agonies.

But the love stronger than death softened and melted the heart even more quickly than all the other passions. My soul, says [Canticles 5:6] the sacred Lover, completely melted as my Beloved spoke. What does this mean, it melted? If not that it is no longer contained in itself, but has flowed out toward its divine Lover. God ordered Moses [Numbers 20:8] to speak to the rock and it would bring forth waters. It is not then a marvel if he himself melted the soul of his Lover, when he spoke to it with his gentleness. The balm is so thick by nature that it is neither fluid nor flowing; and the more it is kept, the thicker it becomes, and finally hardens and becomes red and transparent; but heat dissolves it and makes it fluid. Love had made the Husband fluid and flowing, so the Wife calls him diffused bile: here is how she assures that she is completely melted by love. My soul she says flowed out when my Beloved spoke. The love of the Husband was in her heart and under her breasts, like a very strong new wine [Beautiful comparison of the overflow of the Wife.], which cannot be retained in its barrel; for it was pouring out on all sides; and because the soul followed his love, after the Wife said, Your breasts are better than wine, pouring out precious ointments; she adds, You have poured out my oil. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 12)

5. And as the Husband has poured out his love and his soul into the heart of the Wife, so does the Wife reciprocally pour her soul into the heart of the Husband. And as one sees that a bernal or slope [He means a slope piled with snow such as they are in Savoy.] touched by burning rays goes forth from itself, and leaves its shape, in order to flow toward the place from where the rays touch it, so the soul of this Lover flowed from the side of the voice of her Beloved, going forth from herself and from the limits of her natural being, in order to follow he who was speaking to her.

But how is this sacred flowing of the soul into its Beloved done? And extreme complacency of the lover in the loved thing, produces a certain spiritual impotence, which makes it so that the soul no longer feels any power to remain in itself; that is why like a melted balm, which has no more firmness or solidity, it lets itself go and flow into what it loves: it does not fling itself by way of bounding, nor does it clasp itself by way of union; but it goes about gently flowing, [In the Authorities reported here and in many others, one sees a perfect unity of spirit, of doctrine, of experience and of expressions. This is the greatest sign of the truth of the interior to see people at different times in the same spirit, thinking the same things, and making use of similar comparisons.] like a fluid and liquid thing, in the Divinity that it loves. And as we see that the clouds thickened by the wind of the midday, melting and changing into rain can no longer remain in themselves, but fall and flow below, being mixed so intimately with the earth that they are soaking, that they are no longer but one same thing with it; thus the soul which, though a lover, still remained in itself, comes forth by this sacred flowing and holy fluidity, and leaves itself, not only in order to unite itself to the Beloved, but to mix and dilute itself with him. You then see, Theotime that the flowing out of a soul into its God is nothing but a genuine ecstasy, through which the soul is completely outside of the boundaries of its natural bearing, completely mixed, absorbed, and engulfed in its God. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 12)

## SECTION 25

### FREE WILL. LIBERTY

God leaves us our liberty whole: and it is a mistake to believe that we are not free. But as liberty is the only thing that God has given us to possess in our own right, the most agreeable sacrifice that we can make for him is of the Free will. One gives it to him a long time before he accepts it: but when he takes it, he makes himself master of our conduct, and moves us to his liking. The soul is always free, because it gave itself freely: and it finds that this happy slavery, from which it cannot and does not want to escape, is perfect liberty; whereas the liberty of the man who possesses himself is a hard captivity. In my Writings I have spoken much about liberty and the giving of this liberty to God, and about the way to act in consequence of this giving; and how when one has once explained oneself one does not always start to explain oneself once again (especially in a rapid writing) I believe it necessary to write a few things here about Free-will.

#### SHORT METHOD

There is however this difference, that this vapor (attracted by the Sun) is not drawn freely, and does not follow voluntarily, as the soul does. (Chapter 11, Number 2)

This attraction of God is a very strong attracting virtue; but a virtue that the soul follows very freely; and which being equally strong and gentle, attracts by its strength, and removes by its gentleness. (Chapter 21, Number 3)

#### AUTHORITIES

##### ST. DENNIS

1. Our life is neither constrained nor forced; and because the creatures are gifted with a free will, the divine lights of providence, which enlighten us, are not however either dulled or dimmed by it. (*On the Heavenly Hierarchy* Chapter 9)

##### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

2. I amply provided, (says God), man with all the appropriate means to reach his end, with natural gifts and supernatural graces, which from my part he will never lack: on the contrary with my infinite love I surround and besiege him by various means and ways in order to restrain him under my conduct; and I find nothing which is contrary to me except the free-will that I gave him, against which I constantly fight with love, until he gives it to me and makes me a present of it: and since the time that I received and accepted it, I have shut him in little by little by a secret operation and with loving care; and I never will abandon him – until I lead him to his ordained end. (*Dialogues* Book 3, Chapter 1)

##### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

3. Our Lord draws the hearts with the delectations that he gives them, which makes them find the heavenly doctrine gentle and agreeable: but before this gentleness has engaged and bound the will with its pleasant ties, in order to draw it to the acquiescence and perfect consent of faith, as God does not fail to exert his goodness over us with his holy inspirations, so does our enemy not cease to exercise his wickedness with his temptations. And yet we remain in full liberty to consent [Consent, cooperation with the divine motion. God leads us freely and infallibly because his attractions have a charming gentleness after him.] to the heavenly attractions, or to reject them: for as the sacred Council of Trent said: if someone said that the free-will of man being moved and incited by God, cooperates in nothing, by consenting to God who moves to him and calls him – and that he cannot consent to him, if he wants, such a person would be excommunicated. (*On the Love of God* Book 2, Chapter 3)

4. Ah, Lord Jesus, when will it then be, that having sacrificed all that we have for you, we will immolate for you all that we are! When will we offer our free will to you in sacrifice, only child of our spirit? When will this be that we bind and spread him on the stake of your cross, of your thorns, of your spear, so that like a little lamb it is the agreeable victim of your good pleasure, in order to die and burn with the fire and sword of your holy love? O free will of my heart, what a good thing it will be for you, to be bound and stretched on the cross of the divine Savior! It is a desirable thing for you to die to yourself, in order to forever burn in holocaust to the Lord! Theotime, our free-will is never so free, as when it is the slave of the will of God; as it is never so much in bondage as when it serves our own will: never does it have as much life, as when it dies to itself; and never does it have as much death, as when it lives in self.

We have the freedom to do good and evil; but to choose evil, is not to use, but to abuse this freedom. Let us renounce this unfortunate freedom, and subject our free will forever to the side of heavenly love; let us make ourselves slaves of the affection (love) (love), from which the serfs are happier than the Kings. (One the Love of God Book 12, Chapter 10)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

5. There are no more acts of reflection in this state, and man is outside the power to do it. Yet the free will remains in its full and entire vigor. In this there is an infinite amount of things to marvel at and to admire the strength of the loving activity of God, to melt and convert totally into self those, who wanted to respond to him from themselves wholly without reserve, as much in life as in death. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order Chapter 13)

## SECTION 26 HABIT OF VIRTUES AND DEEDS

### SHORT METHOD

As several repeated acts make up a habit, the soul contracts the habit of conversion and of an act, which becomes as if habitual in the following.

The soul need not then take pains to look for this act in order to perform it; because it subsists: and it cannot even without finding great difficulty in doing so. It even finds that it pulls itself from its state under the pretext of looking for it; which it must never do, since it subsists in habit and since then it is in a conversion and a habitual love. (Chapter 22, Number 3)

Then the soul is as if in a habit of the act resting in this same act. (Chapter 22, Number 5)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. This is the [He says not only habit but firm habit.] firm habit founded in self and in charity with which one approaches the divine things, which gives the grace of being like them to those who approach it. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy* Chapter 3)

2. See Acts Number 4.

3. See Acts Number 5.

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

4. See Acts Number 11.

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

5. After this stripping of the spirit comes the fourth and last degree of this method, namely the proximity or near presence of this essence, which is nothing but a continual presence and a habit of union between God and the soul his Wife; in which the soul being clothed in God and God in the soul, without withdrawing themselves and without any interruption, they come into each other, for whoever [I John 4:16] remains in charity remains in God and God in him. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 7)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

6. See Humility Number 15.

7. See Faults Number 13.

SECTION 27  
HUMILITY. TRUE HUMILITY IS ANNIHILATION.

SHORT METHOD

A genuinely humble soul is not surprised by its own weaknesses; and the more miserable it sees itself as, the more it abandons itself to God. (Chapter 18, Number 2)

[Ecclesiastes 3:21] There is only God who is great, and he is honored only by the humble. And the destruction of our being confesses the Sovereign Being of God. One must cease being, so that the Spirit of the Word may be in us. (Chapter 20, Number 3)

CANTICLE

If you do not know yourself, he says to her, go forth. He means, that she cannot know the divine Object of her love even though she desires it so passionately, that she does not also know herself; since the nothingness of the creature helps one to know the Everything of God. But because it is in this everything of God that the light can exist, which is necessary to uncover the chasm (abyss) of the nothingness of the creature, he orders her to go forth. And from where? From herself. –

Now the nothingness deserves no esteem since it has no good: neither does it deserve any love, since it is nothing: it is on the contrary worthy only of scorn and hate, because of the esteem and love for ourselves, entirely opposed to God, that sin slid in there. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

This praise is accompanied by the promised of a more accomplished beauty, from which hope must give this soul much courage, and also keep it in humility by the knowledge of what it lacks. (Chapter 1, Verse 14)

I will not put more about this here. See Loss, Departure from Self.

AUTHORITIES

1. The Imitation of Jesus Christ: God protects and delivers the humble man; he loves him and consoles him; he lowers himself toward him; he scatters his graces on him with great profusion, and after he has been lowered for a long time, he raises him to a sovereign glory. God uncovers his secrets to the humble heart; he invites and attracts him gently to himself. The man, humble of heart preserves a great peace in all that can cause him confusion and shame; because the world is nothing to him, and he leans only on God alone. (Book 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

2. A humbled understanding sees, hears, tastes and feels this great secret and soon arrives at the divine union. –

Whoever wants to see spiritually must tear his eyes away from self-presumption: for pride blinds many who want to know everything with their own understanding. A humbled understanding is soon enlightened: but a presumptuous understanding without sapience [It is impossible to arrive at the divine union except through consummated humility, which is annihilation.] never arrives at the divine union. (*Life* Chapter 31)

3. A heart which is found in God, sees every created thing below self, not through pride or greatness, but as an effect of the union that it has with God, through which it seems to it that all which is God's, is all it's. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 8)

ST. TERESA

4. As for humility, it must always be in our heads, in order to know that these forces do not come from us. But one must know what this humility must be; for I believe that the Devil does great damage to the souls which give themselves up to prayer, and prevents them from advancing by the false impressions that he gives them of this virtue. (*Life* Chapter 13)

5. Here one acquires true humility in order to not worry about speaking to one's advantage and in praise of oneself, and so that the others do not say any good about us. Here the Lord of the garden distributes the fruit, and not it: and thus there remains in it nothing sticking to its hands. All the good that it has, is related to God. If it says something about self, it is for the glory of his divine Majesty. It certainly knows that it has nothing to do with that, and when it wants, it can even ignore that; because it sees it with its own eyes, which for good or for bad one closes to it for the things of this world, and that one opens for it in order to know truths. (*Life* Chapter 20)



6. As we are not hurt by contemplating the things which are in heaven, and the glory that the Blessed enjoy; on the contrary we rejoice in it, and through this view or consideration we try to attain their felicity: so will we not receive any injury in seeing, that it can come about that in this place of exile such a great God communicates himself to foul verses, and that such a great goodness and such an immense mercy cherish them. I hold it to be certain that the to whom this does harm, to see that it is possible for God to give this grace in this place of exile, does not have any humility or love for his neighbor in the slightest; because if that is not so, how can we not rejoice in God giving these graces to our brother. –

Someone could say that these things seem impossible and that it is good to not shock the weak; but I say that there is less loss in that when they do not believe it, than to not benefit the others to whom God gives these graces. (*Chat. Dem. 1* Chapter 1)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

7. The soul could not arrive at these accounts through any comparison or imagination of its own, because, as we have said, they are above all that: so God performs them in the soul without its ability. From where it comes that sometimes when it claims it and thinks of it the least, his divine Majesty is accustomed to giving it these divine touches. – And in so far as this learning is given to the soul in one fell swoop, as we said, and without it choosing, it does not have to want it or claim it, but only has to be humble and resigned in that; for God will operate when he wants and as it pleases him. And I am not saying [He is speaking about the touches of the will which are without species or distinction: one must not reject them, but only the distinct ones with species.] that one must behave negatively in this learning, like with the apprehensions, because it is part of the union to which we are directing the soul. That is why we are teaching it to strip and detach itself of all other learning: and the means through which God gives it, must be humility, [Perfect humility is always accompanied by pure, disinterested love, as pure love cannot exist without humility.] and suffering for him with resignation and without any interest in any retribution; in that these favors do come to the proprietary soul, because they are caused by a very particular love that God brings to this soul, which also loves him very purely and with a very disinterested heart. This is what the Son of God wanted to say in St. John when he said; [John 14:21] Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will reveal myself to him; which includes [He showed earlier (in the same chapter) that these accounts were confused and general concerning faith, and non-distinct as well as the touches of the will.] the accounts and the touches about which we are speaking. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 26)

8. As these beginners feel so fervent and so diligent in spiritual things and exercises of devotion, even though it is true that the holy things humble by themselves, nevertheless by their imperfection a certain branch of secret pride, which gives them satisfaction with their actions and themselves, is often born to them from this property; -- in that resembling the Pharisee, who praising God boasted about the things that he was doing, and scorned the Publican. The Devil often increases the fervor and desire of such people to do these works or other ones like them, so that by these means their pride or presumption increases, knowing well, that not only are these works and these virtues useless to them, but on the contrary they become vices. – Presuming from themselves, they are accustomed to proposing much and executing little: sometimes they feel like showing their spirit and devotion to the others, and as for this they make exterior signs, movements of signs, and other ceremonies; and sometimes they are accustomed to having raptures, in public rather than in secret, to which the Devil cooperates: and they take pleasure in one knowing what they desire so much. Several of them strive to win the good graces of the Confessors from where a thousand longings and worries are born to them. They are pained to declare their sins nakedly and clearly, for fear that Confessors scorn them: they color them and become pale in order to not appear so wretched: which is to excuse themselves rather than to accuse themselves. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 2)

9. But those who in this state walk in perfection, indeed proceed from another spirit and from another way, because they strengthen and advance themselves a lot in humility, not only scorning their works; but being very little [It is the property of faith, to show only impurity in the soul, until God removes from it all sight of itself.] satisfied with themselves, they consider all the others to be much better, and usually have a holy envy of them with a desire to serve God like them: because all the more fervent they are, and that they do good works and have a taste of it; as they walk in humility, all the more do they know what God deserves, and see all that they do for him, as very little. – These ones with much tranquility and humility have a great desire to be instructed by whoever can benefit them. – And so they with their souls more willingly deal with those who place less value in their spirit and in their state [I add with the same John of the Cross (See Purification Numbers 42-43) that especially when these souls are in the darkness of naked faith, all the earth will be employed in persuading them that they are good and that they are doing well, which they cannot believe: they carry an estate of humiliation which sinks them down to the center of the earth.]; which is a property of the simple, pure and true spirit which is very agreeable to God; for like the habitual wisdom in these humble souls, it immediately urges them to hide their treasures on the inside, and put the evil on the outside: for this is a grace that God gives to the humble, together with the other virtues, as he refuses and denies it to the haughty (proud). Those ones would willingly give the blood of their heart to whoever serves God, and will him to do well as much as they can. In

the imperfections where they see themselves fall, they support themselves with humiliation, meekness and loving fear of God, and hoping in him. But I am learning that there are hardly any souls, which at the beginning walk in this perfection. We would certainly be content, if they did not stumble in opposite things. That is why, as we will tell later, God places those that he wants to purify of all these imperfections in the dark night. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 2)

10. The soul, in the droughts and in the emptiness of this night of the appetite, also draws spiritual humility, which is the virtue opposite the capital vice, that we said to be spiritual pride; through which humility, that it acquires through the said knowledge of itself, it is purged of all these imperfections, in which it had fallen at the time of its prosperity: because seeing itself so miserable, it cannot think, or even allow the first movement of this thought, that it walks more perfectly than the others, or that it goes before them: as much as it takes, it recognizes that the others surpass it. – Finally in passing all the imperfections about which we have spoken concerning spiritual pride are removed from it. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 12)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account

11. St. Bernard: See Hearing (Understanding) Number 33.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

12. Humility is not fitting for men, but for God alone, who wanted to clothe himself in it, so that those who never had to pass to perfect love may have at least humbled themselves and confused their arrogant haughtiness (pride), by the sight of this unfathomable humility of the eternal Word made man.

As for those who are keenly touched by and filled with divine sapience (wisdom), and penetrated in all their interior and exterior powers by the vivifying abundance of his loving flux, they are so full of God, and see so perfectly the nothing of all things and their one nothingness, that they allow no humility for themselves, or in themselves, as such: in that humility in itself is only the order and the path to arrive at the nothing. While one sees and feels any thing in self, one is still far from being annihilated. The nothing is therefore their term, to which they do not fail to make use of humility and humiliations, without [This such deep feeling should not be so easily communicated for fear of offending those who are not capable of this.] thinking of either humility or humiliation; but only of the truth of their nothing. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 8)

13. It is in this way that Sapience (Wisdom) edifies its house, and how the creature, which has been made host to this divine Sapience (Wisdom), lodges it with a mutual and reciprocal pleasure. – Love and virtue build this house, this vessel, this capacity, or to say it better, this temple when Sapience must reside. It is not a great number of works, which make up this divine manufacture; it is the infinite Love which does not let go of its object in any sense or possible way, and humility accompanies it in the same degree of eminence and force for the production of all the virtues. –

Humility here inseparably accompanying love, both together makes up the excellence of the servants of God. Now as it can happen that a man has become so perfectly humble, that he no longer knows what humility is, or any other virtue as such in its practice; in the same way one can ignore what love is, by dint of having surpassed it in God in a completely ineffable manner. Truly there is nothing more of man in man; he is from now on the living instrument of God to do his very holy will constantly and eternally without reflection.

I then return to the nothing as much from the creatures as from myself, in order to be passively and eternally acted on by God without love, without humility, and without any other virtue; in that love and virtue are outside of me, or to say it better, they no longer exist in me; and there where I am and where I live, there is neither difference nor distinction. –

The humility in men who cherish it, must never fail to have its effect: but it is as if in its center in our only Savior, although it certainly pleases him to make us part of it and communicate it to us lovingly by infusion. Let us never believe it to be elsewhere, and let us exercise it only in him; and in this objective and very ravishing view infinite love will animate our humility, and will make of the two; one single thing. –

When they receive an affront they accept it with all their heart; in that they do not reflect on themselves by the slightest loosening of their hold on their divine Object. I do not mean that one must be insensitive, which happens only much later. But I am saying that then the strength of the divine appetite is so great in the soul, that the sufferings which could injure it harm it and make some impression on it, remain on the outside without entering from however far away it may be. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 8)

14. I am saying that one must be sovereignly humble, strong and patient, in order to live unknown among the best men and to be known only by God: and the number of these truly humble souls is so small that one will hardly even meet a single one.

That is why it is best to be perfectly solitary as much bodily as spiritually, as much as is possible; death entirely to self and to all created things, in order to not be known in one's path, in one's spirit, in the order of one's intentions and motives, in one's works, words and procedures only by God. It is better to be thought of as indiscreet and

imprudent, than to justify and excuse oneself if it is not with relation to the extremely weak spirits. But with relation to those who are very wise in their own eyes, and who because of that are curious and subtle examiners of spirits, it is not necessary to do it. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 9)

15. Moreover the man truly humble in perfect habit does not in the least think of either humility or holiness in relation to self. He has a very vile feeling about himself and [*The sure sign of true humility, is to love humiliation. There are many who believe themselves humble and seem to humiliate themselves a lot, but who could not endure the slightest scorn or slander. Whoever rests in peace, in humiliations, is truly humble.*] constantly expects to be treated in accordance with that, according to the eternal order of God, in whom and from whom he lives, and in whom he dies, very content in all occasions. He never reflects on self, on the outside in order to look for himself, or reflects on the creatures, and receives with great pleasure very bad treatment from them, is always longing to receive and endure more: and that is necessary in the infinite love of his loving Object, his very living model. –

The humiliation of these people such as I assume them to be, are passive and active between God and them on the inside. But usually they are more passive than active, as if the effect of the very strong perfectly acquired love, which is very humble and very patient to put up with everything like I said. But their humiliations are active on the outside, when and as much as is needed. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 9)

16. The humble of heart and spirit are beyond that very joyous, so that those who mistreat them, undoubtedly believe that these humble people whom they use as a toy and for their pleasure, do not endure it; or that they suffer their cruel efforts and their mortal pokings with an extreme regret and broken heart from not being able to immediately get revenge, and that they only abstain from this by genuine hypocrisy.

This is a true sign and indication of sovereignly humble men; and the Apostle manifestly showed it with these words: [II Corinthians 6:8-10] We are, he says regarded by those who mistreat us as deceivers, although we are truthful; as unknown and yet acknowledged; as chastised and not mortified; as sad, and always joyous: as dying, ever though we live; as poor, although we enrich many; as having nothing though we possess all things. From these words one easily infers sovereign humility, such as the Apostles practiced it. But one cannot either show or understand any more in the perfectly humble man, except by the term “dead”: considering that if he is totally dead to everything created and to himself, nothing any more is either seen or found of him, for reasons, which are lost for such a man as much as he himself is lost in God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 9)

17. The humility of the perfect who live in exercise above every exercise, is often covered with divine liberty, so well that in the order and in the effect of this liberty, one often seems to judge things which it has to do with, and even to contest them, although one does neither one nor the other. –

For the spiritual man sees and apprehends the moral truths by spirit as much subtly as he lives in spirit, very abstracted from feeling and sense. So well that there is no one who can either discern or know him because of his eminent elevation, except those who are of the same life and spirit. Nevertheless these people are knowledgeable enough by their equality, stability and immobility; and in that they are neither touched nor moved on the inside in the least, although it may seem to be the opposite on the exterior. But they must be diligently on guard that their holy liberty does not cover finding pride and true humility under one same veil for themselves and for the others. They will also be recognized by their total resignation on the outside, when one does not regard their opinion as equitable, or better than the judgment of someone, or several others, of what is presented. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 9)

18. I said above, that the humility of the sovereignly perfect is irrational, and yet it is not contrary to reason, or without reason: but because its habit is such as its foundation, infinitely beyond all reason; it is all the more simple, luminous and unique, because the spirit is raised above reasoning: which we make known and clear enough by the term of non-reflecting. For it is the duty of the truly holy, to let all things be what they are in themselves. If that is the act of those who are entirely dead, how much with greater reason must it be so of the Nothing? (*Spirit of Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 22)

19. There are several states and degrees in humility: For some are the humiliations of the beginners and others are those of profiteers. – But in that I have very amply dealt with the subject of this virtue, I do not desire to repeat that here. I will say only that the true freedom of the saints and true spiritual. (See Scandal Number 8) (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 7)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

20. The fourth disposition, and one of the most necessary to in order to acquire Wisdom, is humility according to the oracle of the Son of God, which wants the proud (haughty) [Luke 14:11] to be humbled, and the humble to be exalted. There is nothing greater than God; and in the soul there cannot be a more sublime greatness than that of approaching God or uniting oneself to him. –

What could have obliged God to choose, among the pure creatures, the Blessed Virgin, to be the Mother of this incarnate Wisdom, except for her humility? All the virtues were great in her, -- they were there to a sovereign degree; nevertheless she recognizes and assures in her Canticle, [Luke 1:48] that humility won the heart of God, and by her charms lured the divine Word into her womb. -- O Wonder! Says St. Augustine, you raise yourself, in order to through the sublimeness of your thoughts attain the knowledge of this supreme Majesty, and she moves away from you: you humble yourself under her powerful hand, and she nears you. --

It is through humility, I mean, through annihilation and the deprivation of light, of feelings, of abilities to produce acts and affections that God wants to introduce the soul to the secret of this face. In vain is it recommended this entire death of itself, this humbling and this subjection of its understanding, this humility which must make it as simple as a child: all these theories cannot instruct it in the secret of its nothingness and in humility, if you yourself, o my God, who descended from the highest of the heavens to teach us, cannot teach it this virtue. -- It is in this way that the soul enters into the feelings of true humility, and of a continual dependence on its God; to whom it says with pleasure, through the words of a perfectly enlightened Prophet [Isaiah 26:12] it is You, o my God, who have performed everything in us; doing almost nothing else for its part, but annihilate imperceptibly its own movements and operations, to let the life and the operations of God live in it. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 10)

SECTION 28  
IMPASSIVITY. IMPOSSIBILITY

I put in my Writings that there comes a time when the souls can receive neither pain nor pleasure from everything, which comes to them from the outside. [See the *Life* of the Author (Part 2, Chapter 4, Number 8), (Chapter 8, Number 1), (Chapter 11, Number 3), (Part 3, Chapter 6, Number 8)]

CANTICLE

But even though she was all ready to be accursed for her brothers, like St. Paul [Romans 9:3]; and even though she works for nothing but their salvation; she is nevertheless indifferent to its success; and she could not be grieved either by her own loss, or by the loss of any creature, looked at from the side of the Justice of God. What she cannot endure is for God to be dishonored; because God arranged charity in her: since that time she has entered into the most pure dispositions of perfect charity. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

AUTHORITIES

**ST. DENNIS WRITING TO ST. JOHN**

1. We see that starting here the people of good, as they are in love with truth, so do they withdraw themselves from affection for the things of the world; and freed entirely from everything which is evil, and inflamed by the divine love of everything which is good, they love peace and holiness, and from this life on they gather and savor. The first beginnings of the one, which is to come, conversing among men in the way of the Angels, in all tranquility of spirit, honored by the name itself of God, in the possession of the goodness of all kinds of goods.

I will never be as badly advised as to think [He believed him to be insensitive to persecution and to his exile, as that which follows leads him to know.] that you are suffering some pain; I believe rather that you do not feel the pains of the body, if it is not as much as you discern them by feelings. But even though I have just occasion to blame those who do you this wrong and who in opportunely consider themselves able to banish this Son of the Gospel, I nevertheless pray to God that they desist from this evil will and from the evil that they are doing to themselves, and that they convert to the good, calling and attracting you toward them in order to be sharers in the light. (Epistle 10)

THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

2. Love does not feel pain it considers work nothing. (Book 3, Chapter 5, Section 4)

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

3. See Mortification Number 1.

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

4. Now the old lovers, (who are the ones who have already exerted and proven themselves in the service of the Husband,) are like old wine whose sediment is already settled: for they no longer have this sentient fervor, or the fervent fire of the exterior; but they in substance taste the sweetness of the wine which is already cooked and settled interiorly in the soul, not in the flavor of the senses like the new ones, but in substance and flavor of spirit and truth of work, not regarding this fervor or these flavors, and not wanting to taste them; because whoever melts his taste in the senses, will also often consequently have pains and distaste in the senses. But in that these old Lovers have no agonies or pains of love in the senses and in the soul: and as rarely does God miss these old friends; because they are already above what could make them be missed. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 17)

5. The Friend already gives to the Wife in this state power, strength and satisfaction in the harmonious lyres of his sweetness, and in the song of the Sirens of his delights, so that no only do they not reign in her, but they cannot even give her any distaste; because [Justice of God Number 5] the greatness and the stability of the soul is so great in this state, that if beforehand the waters of sorrow climbed up to her, either from her sins, or from those of someone else, which is what the spiritual are accustomed to feeling more, either from something else, even though they take it into account, that does not cause them any pain or agony; and compassion, that is to say the feeling of that, has no place in her, even though she has the works and the perfection of it: because here the soul no longer has that weak thing that it had; and that which is strong, consistent and perfect in them remains in it. For in this transformation of love it happens to it the same as to the Angels, which weigh and value perfectly the things where are of pain without feeling any, and exert the works of mercy and compassion without feeling any compassion; even though sometimes in certain things God makes use of exemption for it, giving it something to feel and letting it suffer, so that it deserves more, like he did with the Blessed Virgin, nevertheless the state does not bring that from itself. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 31)

SECTION 29  
INDIFFERENCE. REPOSE. ABANDON

SHORT METHOD

As for practice, it must be to constantly lose all particular will in the will of God; to renounce all particular inclination however good they appear to be, as soon as one feels them being born, in order to put oneself into indifference, and to want only what has wanted since his eternity: to be indifferent to all things, as well for the body as for the soul, as for the temporal and eternal goods. (Chapter 6, Number 4)

We must receive equally all the dispositions which it pleases God to put us in, --- receiving equally all that he gives us, lights, or darkness; ability, or sterility; strength, or weakness; sweetness, or bitterness; temptation, or distraction; pains, trouble, uncertainty, none of these must stop us. (Chapter 8, Number 2)

CANTICLE

I must want only his will, and to be indifferent in his comings and goings. I admit that my love was selfish, though I did not know it: I prefer to his own pleasure that pleasure that I had in loving him, in seeing him and in possessing him. (Chapter 6, Verse 1)

The indifference of this Lover is so great, that it cannot lean either on the side of enjoyment or on the side of deprivation. Death and life are equal for it: and although her love is incomparably stronger than it has ever been, she nevertheless cannot desire cannot desire Paradise; because she remains in the hands of her Husband like things which do not exist. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

AUTHORITIES

ST. TERESA

1. See Abandon Number 13.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

2. See Justice of God Number 7.
3. He makes an admirable comparison of an excellent Musician, who even though he has become deaf did not fail to handle his lute wonderfully; but because he took no pleasure in this, being deprived of his hearing, he no longer sang but for his Prince, who sometimes in order to test him, after having ordered him to sing, first left him, and yet the Musician did not fail to continue. He had neither the pleasure of the melody which his deafness deprived him or, nor the pleasure of pleasing the Prince, since the Prince was absent not enjoying the sweetness of the beautiful air he was singing. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 9)
4. The human heart is the true singer of the sacred canticle of love, and it is itself the harp and the psaltery. Now this singer usually listens to itself, and takes great pleasure in hearing the melody of its Canticle; that is to say, our heart loving God savors the delights of this love. And that is the subject of the change (exchange): for instead of loving this holy love, because it is inclined toward God who is the loved one we love it, because it proceeds from us who are the lovers. So it is no longer God that we are seeking, but we come back to ourselves loving love instead of loving our Beloved; loving, I say, this love not for the good pleasure and the contentment of God, but for the pleasure and contentment that we ourselves draw from it --. And in that the Canticle of divine love is the most excellent of all, he loves it even more, not because divine excellence is praised, but because the air of the song is more delicious and agreeable. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 9)
5. O God, it is not to please you that this man wants to sing; it is for the pleasure that he takes in it. --  
The will of God is as good as and usually almost better, in sickness than in health. If we love health better, let us not say that it is in order to all the better serve God: for who does not see that it is health that we cherish in the will of God, and not the will of God in health. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 10)
6. A will resigned in that of its God, must have no will, but must simply follow that of its God. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 13)
7. See Non-desire Number 36.

SECTION 30  
INFUSIONS. INFLUENCES. DIVINE TRANFUSIONS

See Melting of the Soul, Loss in God.

SHORT METHOD

They do not see that they are losing true contrition, which is this infused love, infinitely greater than anything they could do for themselves. (Chapter 15, Number 3)

CANTICLE

Her soul melted and was liquefied as soon as her Beloved had spoken, -- in such a way that by this she was wholly disposed to flow out into her origin. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

The consummation of the spiritual marriage comes about only when the soul is so melted, annihilated and freed from self, that is can wholly flow out into its God without reserve. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

One must notice that whatever praise the Husband has up to this point given to the Wife, he had not yet said (until she was entirely flowed out into his divine unity,) that she was unique and perfect. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

All, which is said about this ineffable union, is understood with all the essential differences between the Creator and the creature, though with a perfect unity of love and of mystic flowing out into God alone. (Chapter 7, Verse 11)

AUTHORITIES

1. St. Francis of Sales: See Melting of the Soul Number 4.

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

2. This is what God does in the empty and non embraced soul (which is required to receive divine influence) which his Majesty by means of this dark and dry night of contemplation instructs supernaturally in his divine wisdom; which he did not do before because of the pits and the first tastes. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 12)

3. See Naked Faith Number 17.

4. The soul calls this contemplations dark, secret, because, as is said above, it is Mystic Theology that the Theologians call secret wisdom, which according to St. Thomas, is communicated and infused into the soul most particularly by love; which is done secretly with the exclusion of the natural work of understanding and the other powers. That is why, because the said powers cannot acquire it, if it is not that the Holy Spirit pours it out into the soul (as the Wife in the Canticle says) without it understanding how it is, it is called secret. And in truth the soul does not understand it, or even the Devil, because the Master who teaches it is inside the soul substantially. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 17)

5. See Faults Number 9.

6. She has these truths infused by faith into her soul according to the understanding. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 12)

7. Just as the beverage spills out into all the limbs and veins of the body, so does this communication of God spill out substantially into the soul. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

8. See Naked Faith Number 24.

9. Father Nicholas of Jesus Maria gives an account of: St. Bernard: Melting of the Soul, Number 2.

SECTION 31  
JOY OF THE SOUL. TRUE LIBERTY

God never takes away the Freedom, but he accepts it and makes use of it.

SHORT METHOD

They will give their heart and their freedom to God, so that he may dispose of them to his liking. (Chapter 3, Number 2)

The surrender must be, as much on the exterior as in the interior, a total abandonment into the hands of God, forgetting oneself completely, and thinking only of God.

The heart by this means remains always free, content and disengaged. (Chapter 6, Number 3)

As soon as the soul lets itself die to the spirit of God, it feels in itself the evidence of this divine filiation; and it is this evidence which fills it up with all the more joy because it makes the soul know better [Romans 8:15, 21] that it is called to the freedom of the children of God: and that the Spirit that it received, is not a spirit of servitude, but of freedom. The soul then feels that it is acting freely and gently though strongly and infallibly. (Chapter 21, Number 9)

To that I will be answered, that God never takes away man's liberty, and that thus he can always resist God: so that it follows, that I must not say that God acts absolutely and without the consent of man.

I am explaining myself, and I say, that it is then enough for him to give passive consent, so that he may have entire and full freedom; because having given himself to God since the beginning of his path so that he could do of him and in him all that he wanted, he at that time gave a general and active consent to all that God would do. (Chapter 24, Number 7)

CANTICLE

She wants to say, that being in perfect freedom of spirit and breadth of soul since she has had no property in working for the glory of God, she will give him all the fruit of her breasts. (Chapter 7, Verse 12)

The third is a confirmed repose, which will never again be interrupted. It could however be it absolutely, since freedom subsists, and it would be in vain that the Husband would say; until she wants it, if she could never again want it. (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

All is done with a wonderful ease ever since the soul was established in such great freedom. (Chapter 8, Verse 12)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. See Naked Faith Number 3.

HENRY SUSO

2. See Consistency Number 6.

RUSBROCHE

3. See Non-Desire Number 2.

THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

4. It is very rare to find a completely free soul, whose purity is not tarnished by some stain of a secret pursuit of itself. (Book 3, Chapter 33, Section 2)

5. There are some who surrender themselves to me; but it is always with some reserve: and as they do not have full confidence in me, they still intervene in the care of themselves. There are some who at first offer themselves in order to be entirely mine; but finding themselves attacked by temptation, they once again make themselves the masters of themselves; and so they do not advance in virtue.

These [Sacrifice Number 1] people never taste the true freedom of a pure heart, or this gentleness and this grace that I give to the soul in having it enter my wholly divine familiarity, if beforehand they do not surrender themselves to me without reserve, by a sacrifice and a continual immolation of all that they are; since without that no one can ever be perfectly united to me or enjoy the possession of me. (Book 3, Chapter 37, Section 4)



## ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

6. See Purification Number 17.

7. These spirits regular visitors in divine love live in great freedom and place little value in all the things of the earth. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 8)

8. O Love, you annihilate your lovers in themselves, and then you make them free in yourself with perfect and entire freedom: they remain Lords of themselves; they want only what God wants; all the rest is for them an annoying hindrance. (Chapter 9)

9. See Consistency Number 17.

## ST. TERESA

10. This person has not been without payment or salary, his divine Majesty having rewarded it very liberally: for without knowing how, he found himself with this so precious freedom of spirit which the perfect enjoy, and where all the felicity that one could desire in this life is found; because wanting nothing one possesses everything. These souls fear nothing, and desire none of the things of this world, labors do not worry them, and contentment does not move them: finally nothing can take away the peace from them; because it depends only on God, and nothing can steal God from them. (*Foundation of Medine du Champ* Chapter 5)

## THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

11. See Purification Number 33.

12. See Deceit Number 6.

13. In this state of such perfect life, the soul always walks joyous and as if in a feast time, and in its palace has a great jubilation of God and an always new Canticle mixed with joy and love; and from the knowledge of its exalted state, it sometimes says with joy in spirit: [Job 29:18, 20] My glory will always be renewed, and my days will multiply like a palm tree. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 2, Verse 6)

14. Put the soul in the liberty of a calm peace, and pull it from the yoke and servitude of its operation, which is the captivity of Egypt. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 7)

## FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

15. Rusbroche: There is an interior freedom, that is to say, that without images, or figures, or hindrances, someone can raise himself in God in all his interior exercises. (*On the Perfection of the Children of God* Chapter 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

16. The contemplative man is made free, and is delivered from all things, always naked in the secret and intimate regions of his spirit and empty of images and species. (Chapter 3)

17. Dom Bartelemi of the Martyrs: The light of intelligence is purified, and is made all the more subtle and penetrating to see the divine spectacles that it is more free and more extricated from sensory things. For, as St. Augustine says, the contemplative resembles a man raised to the summit of a high mountain, where the clouds and the wind cannot reach; from where it comes that he can turn his view here and there with more freedom, and better envision the clearness and serenity of the Sun, because of the purity of the air of the calm and tranquility of the region. In the same way as much as it is permitted for the spirit to remain in the strong part of intelligence without descending to inferior things, he will be able to contemplate the divine perfection with a free view. Therefore contemplative men live in the region of eternity and clarity; for they are placed outside of all agitation and an infinite jumbling of desires: they go about raising themselves to a certain serene air of liberty, whose life is as distanced from the rest of men as the other men differ from beasts. (*Abridgement* Chapter 12) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Book 2, Chapter 3, Section 6)

18. St. Gregory: Jubilation is an ineffable joy of the soul, which cannot be hidden, and which cannot be declared with words, and nevertheless is signified by certain movements, although it may not be expressed by any property. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Chapter 6, Section 1)

## FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

19. See Consistency Number 34.

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

20. See Humility Number 17.

21. So that the interior man may remain in peaceful enjoyment of his heart and all his powers, and elevated above the sensory things in order of all rectitude and justice. By these means he will be master of absolute lord of his passion, and enjoying a true liberty. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 16)

22. One must speak a little bit about the true and perpetual joy of the Lovers, who continually rejoice in the unity of their husband by this faithful practice. The subject of their perpetual joy is the infinitely infinite and total being of God. It is he who produces and makes all joy flow into his Wives through the fertile and abundant flux of his divine visits, which fill them and deluge them with divine delights. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 18, Section 14)

23. The true freedom of saints and true spirituals in his going forth action, is taken by those who are not so for the same pride. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 7)

24. The people who are entirely abstract and lost to themselves, are of pure spirit in their affections and feelings, and do not let themselves be taken from nature like birds. – Their everything is one single thing in the abyss of life, in which they are lost and engulfed more and more: and so the active and going out freedom of the saintly free people, veils and covers humility, patience, mortification, and the hate of themselves within their acts which have gone forth.

For the imperfect men of some (whatever) life they may be in practice, that they may take care to harm and offend themselves on the actions, practices and words of more spiritual and more lost people: for their path is totally unknown to them: and by telling them that they are free, that is to tell them everything. –

When therefore the men of this true spiritual life, carry themselves and pass off or by excess, or without excess, one must believe that the subject requires it; -- for it is all that this divine freedom produces in the eminent, simple, wide and completely permanent via of divine Wisdom. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 7)

## SECTION 32 JUSTICE OF GOD

### SHORT METHOD

So that man may be united to his God, his Wisdom, accompanied by divine Justice, like a pitiless and devouring fire, must remove from the soul all that is has of property. (Chapter 24, Number 6)

### CANTICLE

This soul neglects all its interest in salvation, perfection, joy, and consolation, in order to think only about the interest of its God. It no longer thinks of enjoying his embraces; but of suffering for him. It no longer asks for anything for itself; but only that God may be glorified. It enters into the interests of divine Justice, with all its heart consenting to all that it will do from it and in it, either at the time, or for eternity. It cannot love in self, or in any creature, except what is God's and for God; and not what is in it and for it. (Chapter 2, Verse 4)

Divine justice is the first, which comes to fight and destroy the justice of the creature. (Chapter 3, Verse 8)

Although the Wife knew well that her justice is her Husband's nevertheless she had some attachment to it. (Chapter 5, Verse 4)

The soul which has arrived at this degree, enters into the interests of divine Justice, and with respect to it, and with respect to the others, in such a way that it could not want any other lot for itself, or for anyone else, but the one that this divine Justice would like to give it for the time and for eternity. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. TERESA

1. This blessed soul hated itself so strongly that it did not fear to say this word: In this life I would not like either grace or mercy, but justice and vengeance on the malefactor. – That is why it does not care about earning indulgences; not that it does not value them highly and hold them in veneration: but it had wanted its own part which had offended, to be chastised and punished as it deserved to be, rather than see it in the presence of God absolved and delivered by such an easy satisfaction. It did not even want to commend itself to the prayers of the others, so that it was always subject to all kinds of tortures, and condemned like a criminal. – It said; O my Love, all the other things can certainly be endured: but to have offended you that cannot be. (*Life* Chapter 20)

2. One day hearing it said. Wake up dead people, and come to the judgment; she cried out loudly, with a great impulsiveness of love, saying: I would like to come here now. She believed that with this love that she felt in her heart, she could pass judgment everywhere, however narrow and rigorous. She saw nothing contrary to this judgment in her, and she rejoiced in it, longing to see this divine and infinitely powerful judge who makes all things trembles except the true and pure love. (*Life* Chapter 42)

3. See Abandon (Abandonment) Number 13.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

4. See Loss Number 29.

5. See Impassivity Number 5.

6. See Union Number 56.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

7. As for the rest one must adore, love, and praise forever the vengeful and powerful justice of our God, as we love his mercy; because both are daughters of his goodness. –

So the just man, who sings the praises of mercy for those who will be saved, will rejoice in the same way for those who will be damned when he will see vengeance: the Blessed will with joy approve the judgment of damnation for the condemned, as well as the salvation of the chosen. And the Angels having exercised their charity toward the men that they had on guard will remain in peace seeing them stubborn or even damned. One must therefore acquiesce to divine will, and kiss it with a dilection (love) and equal reverence the right hand of his mercy, and the left hand of his justice. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 8)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

8. Such a soul is pleased by nothing as much as infinitely delighting God in his total at its eternal expense. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 11)

9. The reasons for that consist of the dying life of the creature, which ordinarily must cross at its own expense and often for a very long time, this first laborious and very difficult region, and returns life to God, in very sorrowful and bitter agony of spirit, about which the mortal fear cannot be sufficiently expressed. It is in this way that man interiorly and exteriorly must return to God, and that the soul becomes his Wife at his eternal expense. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 23)

10. For the rest it is very true, my God, that your intimate friends think neither of just nor of justice, neither of holy nor of holiness, as for them. They do not in the least fear your Justice: for as you are all being, all greatness, all love, all goodness, all wisdom, all power and all mercy, you are also all justice. – And as the property of your justice is to reward love by your enjoyment, it is that which condemns the criminals who are the cause of their own damnation. (Contemplation 38)

I cannot stop myself from putting down the feelings of a Shepherd reported by Father Surin.

11. Reading, he says, a Prophecy of the Day of Judgment that it is not today! That it is not today! The Shepherd answered me. I asked him the reason for his joy seeing that the greatest Saints have always dreaded this last day, because of the universal judgment which will be made. – He told me, that the holy personages who dreaded this day, being pushed for then only by a selfish love into the loss of damned sinners, whose fate was uncertain for themselves, they considered only the severity of the judge and the disadvantage of those judged damned. But for me, said this Shepherd, [Pure love inevitably encloses the love of divine Justice; and the love of divine Justice is the strongest proof of the purity of love. Justice is the attribute of God for God himself; and mercy is an attribute relating to men. Avenge yourself then, o my God, on my own heart if it does not love you enough.] renouncing the interest that self love would make me take in my own loss and in theirs, in order to simply marry the interests of the judge, and the great advantages of the chosen; I should not have any love for this just and loving judge, in order to neither desire nor passion of this day, in which all his desires will be accomplished in the Angels and in men. This second advent of the Son of God must in some way be more passionately desired than the first was by the Holy Fathers, for the great advantage that this second one carries over the first. In the first advent, it seemed that the Son of God had renounced the greatness of his being, since he [Philippians 2:7] annihilates himself taking on the form of a servant. – On the contrary in this second advent, he will come in full possession of the double glory of the soul and of the body, no longer in the debasement of sinners, or in the infirmity of this mortal life; but perfectly living and reigning in his own Majesty, glory, power and authority of God his Father. –

In this Second Advent he will come for himself, and will present himself to all men and the Angels as their judge: and he will judge them to the advantage of his glory and his honor. If then I have a little love for him, must I not therefore long for this day to arrive soon, since it will bring everything to his advantage? I am still adding to this, that as by precept we are obliged to love Jesus Christ more than ourselves under the two titles of Creator and Redeemer, and to prefer his interests to our own; we must love this Second Advent with a wholly particular love, since it carries all the interests of Jesus Christ Redeemer.

If you knew, this Shepherd said, the glorious acts, which will happen on that day, you would long for it as much as I do. – I believe that divine Wisdom hides them from the eyes of the wisest people of the world in order to reveal them to the most simple.

This whole Conference which is long, is divine and of an admirable and surprising penetration. He adds:

I adore [Beautiful sentiments, worthy not only of a Shepherd, but of a Pastor of Pastors.] with all my heart the sentence which will come forth from the mouth of my Judge and Redeemer, indeed the judgment that he will make over me, and because I do not know if then I will be in a state to do him honor, and to want to adore him, so as to join me in his judgment: and if loving him more than myself I see that he draws glory from judgment and from the condemnation that he will give against me, at this hour I want to adore his judgment, and renounce my own selfish one, through which I want his glory for my own contentment, nevertheless detesting all my sins, protesting giving the blow where he will give it, to destroy what he will destroy and to name where he will name.

He finishes by saying:

Who would not love this great day and would not desire it if he loves Jesus Christ, since all that is for his glory. That is why I desire it right now, I love it, and I adore it and everything, which will happen in that day, even if it be to my disadvantage, since it is to the advantage of the Father Creator, of the Son Redeemer and of the Holy Spirit Sanctifier. (The Enlightened Shepherd Conference 5)

12. Mother Mary of the Incarnation first Superior of the Ursulines of Canada, reports in her Life about the admirable and heroic act of satisfaction to divine Justice that she did through a movement of God by sacrificing her salvation and her eternity for him.

I would have become lost she says in this temptation (of despair), if by a secret virtue the goodness of God had not sustained me; for actually I was flying on the edge of Hell. – But in one moment, his goodness and his mercy through a certain secret flowing out of his Spirit, aroused the superior part to want in effect to be thrown down into Hell, not to displease him, but for his divine justice to be satisfied in the eternal punishment of my indignities which had filched (stole) a soul from him, that Jesus Christ had through his infinite mercy redeem with his blood. This act was a simple view of faith which pulled me from this great precipice: I saw that I deserved Hell and that divine Justice had done me no wrong by casting me into the abyss; and I certainly wanted it, providing that I was not deprived of the friendship of God. (*Life* Book 3, Chapter 4, Number 5) (Also see the Addition of Father Claude Martin to this same Chapter and Chapter 5, Number 7)

SECTION 33  
PRAISE OF GOD ABOVE ALL PRAISE

CANTICLE

There are mediocre subjects, about which ordinary praises express enough the good qualities; but there are some which have so strongly above expression, that one cannot praise them worthily, except by admitting that they are above all praises. Such is the divine Husband, who by the excess of his perfection makes his Wife mute, even when she endeavors to praise him with more force in order to attract hearts and spirits to him. His passion makes her burst out in praise of those that she consider to be best fitting for her Husband: but as if coming back from the transport of his love, she was ashamed to have wanted to express a merit which is inexplicable, she condemns herself to an abrupt silence, which seems to put disorder in a speech that she was making as much to evaporate his passion, as to invite his companions to love him who she is so impassioned by. Therefore her silence is preceded by these five single words: his throat is very pleasant.

As the throat serves to push the voice, she shows by that, that he is the expression of the Divinity, and that it is for this that like God, he is above all attributes and all qualities. (Chapter 5, Verse 16)

The Husband wants her to join the mute word of the center, which is the state of unity, the exterior praise of the mouth. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. We wish to be in this more than very luminous and very clear fog, and through the deprivation of sight and knowledge to see and know he who is above all sight and all knowledge: for it is then that truly we see and we know, and that we praise in a way which surpasses all which is, he who is above all being. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 2)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

2. It is said, o my Love, that [Psalms 113:17 (or 115:17 KJV)] the dead will not praise you; that is true. It is not less true in another sense, that the dead praise you eternally and continually. It is said that those who descend into Hell, will not praise you; and me I say on another very true and ineffable sense that those who live in Hell praise you eternally.

But who will comprehend it, except he in whom that is true? If that is to make to all Hell, it does not matter; such are earthly Angels. For being such as I presume them to be, they are the same force, not as much to do, as to endure, and to endure in naked and eternal death. Finally they are so perfectly yours, that they are one in you, and one [That means, that as they are surrounded and penetrated by God like a sponge in the sea, is so from the same sea; one must reach the same God, to speak thus, to touch them.] would reach and touch you as soon as them. They are not great speakers and show nothing of what they are to men, but the least that they can. All vicissitudes are to them only you. Nothing alters or changes them. They have no regard for themselves with either good or evil; and they live immobily content, or rather blessed on all occasions, which I cannot repeat too much, o my dear Love, in profound adoration; so is their life of the very pure spirit. (Contemplation 38)

## SECTION 34 SPIRITUAL MARRIAGE

The divine Marriage is so much the kiss on the mouth, that I could only but make one single proposal out of the two.

### CANTICLE

This kiss that the soul asks for from its God is the essential union, or real, lasting and permanent possession of its divine object: it is the spiritual marriage. – The essential union or the kiss on the mouth, is the spiritual marriage, where there is a union of essence to essence, and a communication of substances: where God takes the soul for his Wife, and unites himself to it, neither personally nor by any act or means; but immediately, reducing everything into unity and possessing it in his unity itself.

Then it is the kiss on the mouth, real and perfect possession. It is a possession which is not sterile, nor unfruitful; since it is extended to nothing less than to the communication of the Word of God to the soul.

It is necessary to know, that God is all mouth, as he is all word: and that the application of this divine mouth to the soul is perfect enjoyment, and the consummation of the marriage, through which the communication of God himself and of his Word is made to this soul.

This is what can be called the Apostolic State, through which the soul is not only Wife, but also fertile: for God as mouth is united to this, some for a while before making it fertile with his own fertility.

There are people who say, that this union can only come about in the other life: but I hold as certain that it can come about in this one, with this difference, that in this life it is possessed without being seen, and in the other life, one sees what one possesses.

Now I say that even though the sight of God is an advantage of glory, which is necessary for its accomplishment, it is nevertheless not the essential beatitude; since one is happy as soon as one possesses the sovereign God; and since one can enjoy it and possess it without seeing it. It is enjoyed here in the night of faith, where one has the happiness of enjoyment without the pleasure of sight; whereas in the other life one will have the clear view of God with the happiness of possessing it. But this blinding prevents neither the true possession nor the very real enjoyment of the Object, nor the consummation of the divine marriage, no more than the real communication of the Word to the soul.

This is very real, and will be admitted by all people of experience. –

As for that which regards the communications of the Word to the soul, I say that this soul must have arrived into God alone [These words God alone indicate perfect unity.], and that it must be established in him by the essential union and by the spiritual marriage before this divine communication is done to it. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

The soul having left itself, and having passed beyond all the creatures encounters its Beloved, who shows himself to it with new charms: which persuades it that the fortunate moment of the consummation of the marriage is near, and that the permanent union is going to be bound. (Chapter 3, Verse 4)

The Husband here calls it by the name of Wife and urges it to make haste to consummate, destroy and annihilate itself, and to accept the spiritual marriage He calls her to be wed and crowned.

But, o Husband, will I say it? Why do you so strongly and for such a long time invite a Wife to a wedding, for which he is very impassioned? (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

You are my Sister; since we belong to the same Father: you are my Wife; since I already married you, and there is no more than a little while before our marriage will be consummated. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

As soon as the soul is entirely disappropriate, it is wholly disposed to be received in the nuptial bed of the Husband; where it is no sooner introduced, than [It is easy to notice here, that my Wife has become completely angelic; whereas these creatures who work against the enlightened one, become completely diabolical.] tasting the sacred and chaste delights on the kiss on the mouth, that it had at first desired, and that presently it possesses through the essential union which it was just gratified by, it cannot stop itself from expressing its contentment with these words; I am completely my Beloved's, and my Beloved is completely mine. O inexplicable advantage! I cannot say anything else about it, except that I am completely my Beloved's without reserve, and that I possess him without any obstacle, hindrance or restriction. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

Here the one must no longer and can no longer make a distinction between God and itself: God is it, and it is God, since the time when through the consummation of the marriage it flowed out into God, and finds itself lost in him, without being able to distinguish itself or find itself again. The true consummation of the marriage make the combining of the soul with its God so great and so intimate, that it can no longer distinguish or see itself: and it is this combining, which deifies [It was proven. See Acts Number 5, Center of the Soul Number 3] to speak thus, the actions of this creature which as arrived at a state as exalted and sublime as this one; because they start from a wholly divine principle, because of the unity which was just bound between God and this soul melted and flowed out in him, God becoming the principle of the actions and the words of this soul, although it also gives them the day, producing them on the outside.

The marriage of the bodies through which [Genesis 2:24] two persons are one same flesh, is only a light sign of this one, through which in the terms of St. Paul [I Corinthians 6:17], God and the soul are no longer but one spirit. One

is so pained to know at what time the spiritual marriage come about. That is easy to see by what has been said. The Engagement, or mutual promises, comes about in the union of the powers; when the soul gives itself wholly to its God, and its God gives himself wholly to it, with plans of admitting it into the union: that is an accord and reciprocal promise. But alas there is still some of the path to follow, and there is much to suffer before this so desired union may be accorded and accomplished! The Marriage comes about when the soul finds itself dead and expired in the arms of the Husband, who seeing it more disposed receives it in his union: but the Consummation of the marriage only comes about when the soul is so melted, annihilated, and disappropriate, that it can completely flow out into its God without reserve. Then this is made admirable combining of the creature with its Creator, who confines them in unity, to speak thus, though with an infinite disproportion, such as that of a drop of water with the sea, in that even though it has become the sea, it is still always a little droplet, even though in the quality of water it may be proportionate with all the sea, and suitable to be combined and to no longer make but a sea with it.

If some Saints or Authors, have establishes this divine marriage in states less advanced than the one that I am describing; it is that taking the engagement as the marriage, and the marriage as its consummation; and that in speaking with freedom of mind, they did not always exactly distinguish these degrees, just as one often attributes the divine union to states which are only the first steps of the interior path. All the souls, which had the favor of engagement, believe themselves to be wives, all the more because the Husband himself deals with them with this name, as one saw in this Canticle. There is only experience and divine light, which can make this difference known. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

God says, that this soul, in which the divine marriage has been perfectly consummated, by its total annihilation and its entire loss, is done in simplicity, and that it is unique, in that there are few who resemble it; it is also unique, because it is reduced in God into the perfect unity of its origin. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

Jealousy is hard like hell: [The sense of this has been explained. (See in the article unknown Saints. Canticle 6:6 and the Note. Also see Entire Death number 5 the Note.)] It is what makes him close his Wife in this way. He wants her so completely for himself that if by an infidelity [Note, that she can fall though with much difficulty.] as much difficult as catastrophic, she came to withdraw herself from dependence on him, from that moment on she would be reject by him as if in hell, by the excess of his indignation. (Chapter 8, Verse 6)

## AUTHORITIES

### HARPHIUS

1. God gently inclines himself toward the soul in order to give it the sacred kiss, which is nothing but his immediate and unknown presence; and the soul displays its mouth, which is its naked, simple and loving presence: there God and the soul are united without medium in unity of love; and the soul is happily deified. (*Mystic Theology* Book 3, Chapter 23)

2. It is only the perfect soul which feels this kiss, and yet rarely; because for that it must love chastely, which is to say, that it must love only its sole Husband, must ask for nothing and look for nothing outside him; it must love righteously, which is to say, not by the concupiscence of the flesh, but by the purity of the spirit; it must have ardently, which is to say so much intoxicated by the love of its Husband, that it does not think of his Majesty. (*Mystic Theology* Book 3, Chapter 24)

### ST. TERESA

3. When it pleases Our Lord to have compassion for what this soul has suffered and suffers, by its ardent desire, which he has already taken spiritually for his Wife; before the spiritual marriage is consummated, he puts her in his residence, which is this seventh one: for as there is one in heaven, so must there be one in the soul, where only his Majesty lives, which residence we can say or call another heaven. (*Chastisement Dem. VII* Chapter 1)

4. What God communicates to the soul in an instant, and the very great delight that it feels, is such a great secret, and such a sublime and exalted favor, that I do not know what to compare it to. — One cannot say any more about it, except that following what one could have heard about it, the spirit of this soul is made one same thing with God, who as he is also spirit, wanted to show the love that he brings to us, by making some people see up to where this excessive goodness extends, so that we may bless and praise his greatness, in condescending to unite himself to his creature so much, that he no longer wants to separate himself, like there is no more separation between people who are married. — It is as if the water of heaven fell into a river, or into a fountain, where all the waters combines, in such a way that one can no longer discern that of heaven from that of the earth: or it is as if a small stream flowed into the sea from which it can no longer be separated; or even as if in a bedroom there are two windows through which a great light enters: for even though this lightness enters divided by two different passages, it nevertheless makes up one single light in the room. This is perhaps what St. Paul means by these words. [I Corinthians 6:17] Whoever adheres to the Lord becomes one same spirit with him, in that touching on this divine marriage, which presupposes that God approached the soul



through union. He also says these words [Philippians 1:21, “Jesus Christ is my life, and death is gain.”]; mihi rivere Christus est, et mori lucrum; which, in my opinion, the soul can also make use of in this state; for it is there that dies this butterfly about which we have spoken, and that with great joy; because then its life is Jesus Christ. (*Chastisement Dem. VII* Chapter 2)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

5. God in order to give the meaning of the exalted state of union that he had given to Moses, said about him: [Numbers 12:8] I speak to him mouth to mouth and he sees the Lord not through riddles and signs, but openly. In which he leads us to understand, that in this high state of union of love, God does not communicate himself to the soul through my disguise of imaginary vision, of appearance or figures, but mouth to mouth [That is the kiss on the mouth. Cantic 1:1], which is today, in the pure and naked essence of God, which is like the mouth of God in love, and in the pure and naked essence of the soul, on the condition of the will, which is the mouth of the soul in the love of God. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 16)

6. Now it is necessary to know that several people arrive and enter the first cellars, each according to the perfection of love that he has: but few in this life arrive at this last and most interior cellar, in that there the perfect union with God, that is called spiritual marriage, which is spoken about in this passage, is already made. And what God communicates to the soul in this narrow conjunction is almost ineffable, and one could not say anything about it like about the same God: one cannot say anything which would resemble it; because God is he who communicates himself to the soul with an admirable glory of transformation of it into him, being both in one, as we would say the window is with the sun ray, or the charcoal with the fire, or the light of stars with that of the sun, not however so essentially or so perfectly as in the other life. And so the soul in order to lead one to understand what it receives in this basement of union, say nothing else; and I do not think that it can say anything more appropriate to speak suitably about it than these words: From my Friend I drank without pain: --

One must know that even though the soul has always been in this exalted state of marriage ever since God placed it there, it is not however always in actual union according to the said powers, although it remains there according to the substance of the soul, by a very advantageous grace and a conspicuous privilege: yet in this substantial and free union of the soul the powers are also very often united and drink in this basement; the understanding, the will loving. (*Cantic between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

7. The spiritual marriage between the soul and the Son of God its Husband remained to draw together: which is much more than the engagement; because it is a total transformation in the loved one, where the two parties deliver themselves to each other mutually, with an entire possession of the other one, through a perfect and consummated union of love, in which the soul is made divine, and made God through sharing, as much as it can be done in this life. And so it is the highest state one can reach here below: for as in the consummation of the carnal marriage they are two in one same flesh, according to what the Holy Scripture says [Genesis 2:24]; also in the same way this spiritual marriage between God and the soul being consummated, there are two natures in one spirit and love of God; like when the light of the star or of the candle in the presence of the sun is joined and united with the sun's light, the sun is what is illuminating, hiding or absorbing the other lights in itself. (*Cantic between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 28)

8. The Wife in this Cantic applies herself to enjoying her Friend in the interior retreat of her soul, where he is united with her in love, where she enjoys him excellently in hiding. And the things which pass into her in this recollection of the marriage with her Beloved, are so lofty and so savory, that she cannot tell them, nor would want to: for it is about them that Isaiah said [Isaiah 24:16] My secret of mine, any secret of mine. And so she does possess him, and alone hears him, and alone enjoys him, and takes pleasure that this is alone to alone. (*Cantic between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 33)

9. In this place you will show me . . . . .

All that my soul was claiming.

This claim is the equality or union of love; because the Lover cannot be satisfied, if he does feel and perceive that he loves as much as he is loved: And as the soul sees the truth and the immensity of the love with which God loves it, it would also like, if it could, to not love him less highly and less perfectly; and for this reason it longs for the actual transformation: in that the soul cannot arrive at this equality and perfection of love, if not by a total transformation of its will with God's; in which the wills unite in such a way that one is made out of the two, in the way that the Apostle says [Galatians 2:20]: I live me, but no longer me; but Jesus Christ lives in me. And so in this sense there is equality of love: because the will of the soul which has been converted into the will of God, is already wholly the will of God, and the will of the soul is not lost, but it is made the will of God; and consequently the soul loves God with the will of God, which in the sense that we said, is also its will; from it comes that it loves him with a very exalted and very sublime love, which is infused in it by the Holy Spirit, according to what the same Apostle says; The charity of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.

[Pure Love number 24] Now one must notice that the soul does not say here, you will give me that; but you will show me nevertheless it says very appropriately that he shows or teaches it love; that is to say that he shows it how to love like he loves himself; for God loving us firstly, he teaches us to love purely and entirely like he loves us. And because in this transformation, God communicating himself to the soul, he shows it a whole generous and pure love, with which he communicates himself wholly to it in a very loving way, transforming it into self, in which he gives it the same love with which it loves him; it simply to show the soul how to love, which is like putting the instrument into its hands, and telling it how it must do it: and so thus the soul in this state loves God with a very exalted love, similar to the one with which it is loved by him. From where it comes that not only is the soul taught how to love, but also that it becomes mistress of loving, being united with the same master of love: and consequently it remains content and satisfied; for it is not so, until it has reached this love, which is to love God perfectly, with the same love with which he loves himself, in the sense which has been said in the way of living of St. Paul.

But that cannot happen entirely in this life; even though in the state of perfection, which is the spiritual marriage, about which we are speaking, it cannot happen in the least. And from this manner of perfect love an intimate and substantial jubilation in God is immediately born in the soul, in that it seems, and is in such a way, that all the substance of the soul which is plunged into glory, exalts God; and it also feel by way of intimate function which makes it praise, revere, esteem and magnify God with a great joy steeped in love: and that does not happen in this way, without God having given the soul a great purity in the said state of transformation, such [See the Explanation of the Canticle Chapter 8, Verse 5 and Short Method Chapter 24, Number 3] as that of the state or innocence or of baptism; which the soul also says that the Husband had to immediately give it in the same transformation. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 38)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

10. St. Bernard: See Melting of the Soul Number 2.

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account of

11. St. Bernard [or rather the Abbot William] to the brothers of Mount; There is still another likeness with God so appropriate, that it is no longer called a likeness but a unity of spirit; man being made one spirit with God [admirable] not only through the unity of the same will, but through a more distinct unity of virtue to not want something else. Now this unity is called unity of spirit, not only because the Holy Spirit made it, or even though the Holy Spirit touches the spirit of man; but because it is the Holy Spirit itself, God – charity, when through him (who is the love of the Father and the Son, the unity, the sweetness, the good, the kiss, the embrace, and all which can be common to both in this sovereign unity of truth, and truth of unity,) it is done to man, in his way, with respect to God that which he is with substantial unity to the Son with respect to the Father, or to the Father with respect to the Son, when in an ineffable and inconceivable, the man of God deserves not to be made God; but yet to be made by grace what God is by nature. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Speech 2, Section 3)

12. And he adds: Words so sublime that they must be left to be understood by the Scholars: for those who are not versed or experienced in them, will understand only with much difficulty. Notice only for their intelligence that the Mystics, make a big difference between the soul which is in grace, and the one which is a friend, or which reaches the high degree of divine union; for to be in grace is like the engagement, is to be loved truly, is the resolution of the soul to never separate itself from the taste and from the divine will. But this union that they call the spiritual marriage is not only a communication of affection, but a very intimate communication of people, even though are conjointly come acts of love and good will. In this union therefore God communicates the divine being with an extraordinary love to the soul, and the Father and the Son send it the Holy Spirit, so that the soul, as Wife, being already one same thing with him, communicates the goods of God into everyone, and so that God, his essence, his attributes and divine People may be [This is what I called commerce of the Holy Trinity. (See the Explanation of 1 Corinthians 1:8-9) This state is what is said in St. John (John 14:21, 23): If someone does my will, my Father will love him, we will come to him, and we will make our dwelling in him. To truly perform the will of God is to lose our will in God's so much, that it is made one same thing with his, and even changed into his. God loves this soul which is no longer in itself but in him, because it has no more dissimilarity, the divine image being perfectly renewed, as much as it can be so here; and the whole Trinity remains in this soul. It is not said, that it passes through, but that it remains there, which signifies permanence.] Its, the soul through love sharing in all the divine goods: and the Holy Spirit, (which because it proceeds from the Father and from the Son is said to be sent by them to the soul,) in this very divine union with respect to the soul in its way, becomes what it is in this substantial unity between the Father and the Son, with a true procession; in such a way that it is present in the soul with love, sweetness, goodness, binding and embrace, that it deifies the soul and unites it with itself and with the Father and the Son, from whom it is sent, and who are one same God with it.

Here in substance is what St. Bernard means, and it is not without reason, that he calls this union of spirit the perfect union; since the same Holy Spirit, which the love of the Father and the Son, is sent to this soul to be [If the Holy Spirit is its spirit, it is its thought and its movement, its love and the principle of its life.] its spirit and its good in this communication of love. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Speech 2, Section 3)

13. Brother John of St. Samson: Ah, who is the Wife who is ravished forever in the love of her Husband, having been lovingly received in the deepest, tightest, most secret, and most delicious of his embraces! Ah, what is it to the Wife to have received the kiss on the mouth from her Husband! [Since there are infinite delights as well as secrets to endure for God, how would there not be to enjoy God: I say about God himself; for (there is much difference) between the possession of some gift and that of the giver; it is like between a flash of lighting and the light of the sun.] What overwhelming of delights can one imagine to be more admirable, than those, which proceed from the reciprocal act of such a unique love? Refute me if you want and if you can, beloved Wives which have the experience of such an effect. Tell hardly if there are effective delights, transfusions, transports, ecstasies and raptures, enjoyments, embraces and similar loves to this. (Soliloquy 3)

## SECTION 35 MYSTERIES

### SHORT METHOD

One will object to me that one does not impart the mysteries to oneself through this path. It is completely the opposite; they are in reality given to the soul. Jesus Christ to whom one surrenders oneself, and whom one follows as the [John 14:6] way, whom one listens to as truth, and who gives life to us as life, imparting himself to the soul, makes it carry all his states. To carry the states of Jesus Christ is something indeed greater than only contemplating the states of Jesus Christ. St. Paul carried the states of Jesus Christ on his body: [Galatians 6:17] I carry, he says, the marks of Jesus Christ on my body. But he does not say that he was reasoning upon.

Often Jesus Christ in this state of abandonment gives views of his states in a very particular way.

One must [I am not then saying that one must reject the image of Jesus Christ; on the contrary: but one must not reason about his states, but we must let ourselves be applied to these same states when God does it.] receive them and let oneself be applied to everything which will please him, receiving equally all the dispositions where it pleases him to place us, and not choosing any of them by ourselves except that of remaining nearby him, to gain his affection, to annihilate ourselves before him; but receiving equally all that he gives us, light or darkness; facility or sterility; strength or weakness; sweetness or bitterness; temptation, or distraction; pains, troubles, uncertainties; nothing of all that must stop us.

There are [This is the feeling and the experience of St. Teresa, as will be seen in Prayers 2 Number 5] people that God applies to taste one of his mysteries during entire years: the sight or thought alone of this mystery recollect them on the inside: that they may be faithful there. But when God takes them away from them that they may let themselves be stripped of it.

Other are grieved over not being able to think about one mystery: that is without reason, since the loving attention to God encloses all particular devotion, and since whoever is united to God alone by his repose in him, is applied to all the mysteries in a more excellent manner. Whoever loves God, loves everything of him. (Chapter 8)

Before citing the Authorities, I must explain, that the invocation of Saints, and the particular application to some Saint must be included in the mysteries. The reasons, for which the souls of this degree cannot invoke the Saints when they want to, but when God pushes them to, are the same as for the cessation of acts and meditations. As long as the soul possesses itself, it acts according to its inclination which carries it toward some Saints; but when it is put in generality and simplicity, all particular devotions are removed from it, this state enclosing them all in general. When we are in ourselves, we hold everything in us in distinction; but when we pass into God, we carry everything with us in God in simplicity and without distinction: then one finds oneself a union of unity with the Saints that one had not understood up until then, and that the sole experience can make understood. The invocation of Saints is like the other acts, operations, mysteries, which flow out and are lost with us in God; otherwise one would be stopped by that itself. The soul being Wife, it finds itself so near its God, so strongly absorbed and combined with him, that it sees only him, and in him what he makes it see: and when he wants it to make use of some Saint, he place the Saint in its heart by impression, with a gentle correspondence: then the soul knows that what God makes it ask for will be accorded in union with this Saint and by his intervention. That usually happens for the Saints, to whom one had great and very distinct devotion before being in the state of simple unity. It is to be noticed that this feeling is certainly different from that of the heretics; for they remove the invocation of the Saints from all Christians: but it is not the same here, where these devotions by dint of activity have surpassed and fallen into the unity with the rest of the other acts. Which does not prevent God in this unity from applying himself to some Saint, as it pleases him, and when it pleases him: but that is done as if from friend to friend without going forth from the unity itself, and by the movement of grace. To better comprehend this, one must pay attention that as long as the soul can make use of its own operation, it acts in distinction with God, the blessed Virgin and the Saints: but when it has fallen into the divine unity, it no longer acts through itself, but through the movement of God; it is then that it finds all the mysteries, the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in this divine unity, where they are all lost, and where it is lost itself though less perfectly. This is truly the experience of the Communion of Saints. As the light of the stars, without them losing their particular shine, find themselves overcome by the light of the Sun, and absorbed in it; in the same way in this state the Majesty of God, by means of faith, absorbs all particular devotion in the Saints; which does not prevent that the devotion is real and more than ever: but it is without distinction in God himself; the soul, as I said, no longer able to see anything outside of God. This devotion is called union or communion.

## AUTHORITIES

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. No man feels the impression of the sufferings of Jesus Christ as far in the heart as he who suffers sorrows like his. (Book 2, Chapter 12, Section 4)

### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

2. St. Bonaventure: Jesus Christ undresses himself to our view when the spirit tries to watch the Wisdom from on high with intellectual eyes --. By removing the spirit of the creatures, he must enter into the obscurity and the ray of darkness. (On the Light of the Church Sermon 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2)

### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

3. When you are pulled and penetrated by the gentleness of the love in love itself, you will experience what the prevention of images is, and how much the created things are harmful to the introduction of the soul into God. By this loving exercise of aspiration you will become free from this prevention, and will remain naked, simple, peaceful, very recollected and free inside of you, where you will be like a well polished mirror, naively representing the excellence and the beauty of God in the inside, and of the sacred Humanity of our very dear and beloved Savior and Husband on the outside. Thus you will be composed interiorly and exteriorly like the faithful Mistress, who always assists in the presence of God her Beloved. (*Mirror and Flames of Love* Chapter 7)

4. For the souls which have surmounted and surpassed all pains by love and the virtues, and then by the virtues in love; when such souls have arrived at the essence and in the most intimate part of the same love, either in your sole Divinity, or in your Divinity and Humanity without distinction like one single thing; and that [Brother John of St. Samson speaks in this manner only about all the Mysteries in his Soliloquies and in his Contemplations.] by a very simple, very eminent and very penetrating sight; such people, I say, are melted there, and very firmly fixed and established in their Everything (All), which is to say everything. There they no longer live any other life but yours, O my Love, and they enjoy you in their intimate love. (Contemplation 13)

### FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

5. The Reverend Mother of Chantal [*Life of the Mother of Chantal* Part 2, Chapter 7] proposed her doubt on this matter to her dear Father, and she advanced a resolution, but yet with the submission that she owed to the Saint. My dear Father, she said, all the Preachers and the good books teach that one must meditate on the mysteries and benefits of Our Lord: however the soul which is in the state above cannot do it in any fashion in this way; but it seems that it does it in a very excellent fashion, which is a simple memory and extremely delicate representation of the mysteries with very sweet and very savory affections; since God who is infinite in greatness, includes all the mysteries, and possessing him excellently, one is in the essence of mystery that one had been considering. You understand me better, my Father, than I can tell you. St. Francis de Sales answered; That the soul stops at the mysteries in the way of prayer that God gave it; for the Preachers and the spiritual Fathers do not understand it differently. (9<sup>th</sup> Mystic Conference)

6. After we spoke about the mysteries of the Son of God suffering in his passion, and expose with an incomprehensible love on our Altars under the species, one must say as much about the incomparable grandeurs of the very hold Virgin. This blind perceptive man said in his raptures [*Brother John of St. Samson in His Life* Chapter 16]: I do not know what it is that God has put in his very worthy Mother except to see him and contemplate him in very profound silence, and in very simple and very eminent view of such a wide, deep, long, high, totally impenetrable and non-navigable sea; to see him, I say, o my God, in the sur-eminence of your Everything in your same faith, which removes from us all possible conception and expression of such a subject in the sight and implicit and very ineffable learning, that faith gives us of it, and finally in your infinite appearance, as if you and your Mother should be only one same thing. (9<sup>th</sup> Mystic Conference)

SECTION 36  
MEANS. WITHOUT METHOD OR SURROUNDINGS.

CANTICLE

The Husband gives an excellent instruction to his Mistress: If you do not know yourself, he tells her, go forth. He means that she could not know the divine Object of her love, even though she desires him so passionately, even though she does not also know herself; since the nothingness of the creature helps to know the Everything of God. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

One must ascend still higher, and pass beyond all things, in order to enter with me into the womb of my Father, and you rest there without surroundings, and by the lost of every means: the immediate and central union being made only above all the created.

But also come forth from the dens of lions, and from the mountains of leopards: for it will be only across the cruelest persecutions of men and devils, like so many ferocious beasts, that you will be able to arrive at such a divine state. It is time to raise yourself more then ever above all that, since you are ready to be crowned in capacity of my Wife. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

The Wife no longer has to make means, or to be enclosed and shut in: she has entered into an excellent sharing of the immensity of God. (Chapter 7, Verse 11)

Her Beloved, possessing her perfectly in his essence and in his powers in a very real and invariable manner, beyond all time, all means, and all places. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

AUTHORITIES

HENRY SUSO

1. When the spirit begins to remain in this sacred obscurity, in such a way that it no longer knows itself, it loses all medium and all property, as St. Bernard says. (*Dialogue on the Truth* Chapter 20)

HARPHIUS

2. This degree is called love without means, through which our spirit tires itself out and is annihilated, its forces fall and it finally evacuates itself in a certain inaction. (*Mystic Theology* Book 3, Chapter 16)

3. See Naked Faith Number 7.

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

4. I do not want part of a love, which is neither for God nor in God. I cannot bear this word for, or this word in, because it signifies something interposed between God and me, that the pure and clean soul cannot endure, because of its very great purity and cleanliness, which has no limits no more than God does, because it is himself. (*Life* Chapter 18)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

5. The term where the soul goes is above all things, even though it may be the highest knowledge, the most sublime taste that it can have in this life; and so overall one must pass to non-knowing. Consequently in this path to leave one path is to enter on the path, or to say it better, to pass to the term; and to leave the means is to enter that which has no means, which is God: in that the soul which reaches this state, has no more means or ways, and does not and cannot attach itself to them. I am talking about means to hear, to taste, to feel, even though it contains all means in itself, just as he who has nothing and who possesses everything. For having the courage to pass from its limited nature, as for the interior and the exterior, it enters without limits in the supernatural, which has no means, containing all the means with eminence. From where it comes that to arrive here, is to go forth from there, going forth from self and distancing itself from this baseness in order to ascend to this very eminent height. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 4)

6. As the Wisdom of God, to which the understand must unite itself, has no means or ways, and does not fall under the limits or distinct and particular comprehensions, and as in order to join these two extremities in the perfect union, the soul and divine Wisdom, it is necessary that they agree on the similarity between them in certain means; from that comes that the soul must be as pure [See *Short Method* Chapter 24, Number 3] and simple in the way that it can, not limited, nor attached to any particular comprehension, nor modified with some limits of shape, species or image: For since God is not included below, neither must the soul in order to unit itself to God, have any distinct form or comprehension. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 16)

7. Not only does God lead the soul into this his solitude; but he himself alone operates in it without any other means: because it is the property of this union of the soul with God in the spiritual marriage, that God makes in it and communicates himself [I have written much about that (See the Explanation of Cantic 1:1. Also see the Explanation of Apocalypse {Revelations} 8:5)] only by himself, no longer by means of the Angels as before, nor by means of natural ability; because the exterior and interior senses and all the creatures, indeed even the soul, do not in the least serve to receive the great supernatural favors that God performs in this state, which do not fall in ability or in natural operation, or in the diligence of the soul, him alone performs them in it. (*Cantic between the Wife and the Husband* Verse 4, Couplet 35)

8. The thing is all the more ample and capable because it is subtle, and all the more communicative because it is more delicate. Therefore o delicate touch, which flows out all the further because you are more subtle, already the vase of my soul is simple, pure and capable of you by your reach; therefore, o delicate touch which feeling no material thing in you, touches the soul all the more and more profoundly, changing it from human to divine, because your divine being, with which you touch it, is removed from means and ways, and free from every husk of forms and figures: Finally o delicate and very delicate touch, since you touch the soul by your very pure and very simple being, which being infinite is also infinitely delicate. (*Living Flame of Love* Cantic 2, Verse 3)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

9. Even though there is no human means to see this Essence, as has been proven there is however a divine one: and although there is no active, or actual means, that is to say, where man can operate and be the agent; there is however a passive or essential one, where man does nothing, but is the patient: and because one does nothing there, I call it means without means; for due allowance being made for that through him we reach our final end, he is truly means, but because the soul does not perform there, he is without spiritual means, seeing that every spiritual means tells an operation: or indeed it can be said a wholly divine means: God alone operates there, and the soul does but suffer, and so it is immediately united to God without any means as the Doctors say: The chief of our spirit [says St. Bonaventure (Path 2 to Eternity)] is intelligence, which to holy men is united immediately to God: And elsewhere [*Mystic Theology* Chapter 3] the elevation of spirit which is performed by ignorance, is nothing other than being immediately moved by the ardent love with any mirror (delusion) or help from the creatures. This means without means, to say it briefly, will not be other than the continuation of this will [of God] by always pursuing it – until it has been led to the essential will. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 3)

## SECTION 37 ENTIRE (WHOLE) DEATH

### SHORT METHOD

The destruction of our being confesses the Sovereign Being of God.

One must cease being, so that the Spirit of the Word may be in us. Now so that it may come there, we must surrender our life to him, and die to ourselves, so that he may live himself in us. Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar is the model of the Mystic state. As soon as he comes there the substance of the bread must yield its place to him, and it is necessary that there remain only the simple accidents of it.

In the same way we must surrender our being to Jesus Christ's; and we must cease living so that he may live in us and so that being [Colossians 3:3] dead, our life is found hidden with him in God. (Chapter 20, Number 3)

Jesus Christ says [John 5:26] that he has life in himself: all the other beings have only a borrowed life; but the Word has life in him: and as he is communicative by nature, he desires to communicate it to men. We must therefore make room for this life to flow out into us, which can only be done by the evacuation and the loss of the life of Adam, and by our own action, as St. Paul assures; [II Corinthians 5:17] If someone is then in Jesus Christ, he is a new creature; all which was of the former has passed away, everything is made new. That can come about only by the death of ourselves and of our own action, so that the action of God may be substituted in its place. (Chapter 21, Number 6)

It is impossible [This has been proven. See Acts, Annihilation] to arrive at the Divine union by the sole path of meditation, or even of affections, or any luminous and understood prayer that this may be there are several reasons. ---

Firstly according to the evidence of Scripture, [Exodus 33:20] No man will see God as long as he is living. Now every exercise of discursive Prayer or even of active Contemplation, regarded [Note as end, and not as disposition to the passive one.] as an end, and not as a disposition to the passive one, are living exercises, through which we cannot see God; that is to say, to be united to him. All, which is from man and from his own industry, however noble and exalted it may be, all that I say must die. (Chapter 24, Number 1)

### CANTICLE

The Directors – not being dead to themselves or crucified to the world with Jesus Christ, do not teach those they direct to renounce themselves, to crucify themselves and to die in all things, in order to live in God alone, and so that Jesus Christ may live in them. From where it comes that the ones and the others being in an extremely natural and mortified life, their conduct is also extremely human. (Chapter 1, Verse 6)

The Husband orders it to go forth from itself --- by the renouncement, and by the fidelity to pursue itself in all things, [True mortification. One must notice here, that my Wife is certainly far from seeking to plunge herself into the crime; since she cannot even look for innocent diversions: everything is dead for it, and it is dead to all things. A soul, which has tasted God in an ineffable manner, has taste too delicate to be able to take pleasure in the things of the earth. Those who after having tasted God, leave him, and let themselves go so far as to offend him, are those who having sought God only for this tastes, and not for himself, look for other tastes outside of him when the others fail them. But God does not abandon a soul, which seeks God for God, which fears his favors more than it desires them, which loves the crosses without fearing them. As the souls which grow lax and fall into disorder, only do so because in the first deprivation they go about looking to be compensated for what God makes them suffer in the pleasures of the senses (that at first they believe to be innocent); this is what makes it that in all the Writings that Our Lord had me do, it is extremely recommended to let oneself be devoured without seeking any consolation, to let oneself die without permitting oneself a breath of life. That seems to me to be of extreme consequence: for almost all the souls in this place, turn around going back into activity in order to find the tastes that they have lost, and these are the best; or even follow their sensuality, and as the love that they had for God was impure, sensual, and concerned only them, when they no longer feel it, they turn their sensuality from the side of the creatures; and as they loved God for the pleasure of loving him, as St. Francis of Sales said, (See Indifference Number 4) and not for him, this pleasure lacking in them, they look for illicit ones; and as their taste has been refined by the spiritual taste, that makes it so that they need an infinity of pleasures in order to be satisfied, which they are never, dimming their conscience and a thousand remorse by a more unrestrained license. If these people had loved God purely, it would never have been permitted for them to fall in this way.

What I still want to say here is, that in the beginnings, that the soul is completely in the gentleness and heavenly consolations, even though it appears strong, it does not fail to be in such an extreme weakness, that the slightest opportunities distract it and make it commit a thousand mistakes: After the first purgation or test (trial), that the Blessed John of the Cross calls night of sense, it is no longer subject to these things; so that it can exit on the outside for all the exterior things of the order of God, without dirtying itself, like it was doing before through a thousand vain self satisfactions and pursuits. I say these things of order of God and of his will: for in order to vanish and divert itself it would not be the same; and the soul which is already here could do so only with pain, and without an infidelity all the more horrible because it can be assured of it more easily. This is however the time of all the spiritual life to be most



feared: because finding nothing on the inside which sustains, if one strives to take pleasure on the outside, in the beginning one finds difficulty in it; but in the following one could do it easily: And this is the place where the spirituals get caught and are lost. That is why I warned about that in all the writings. I say at the beginning of the night of sense, and not in this state, where there is almost nothing more to fear. It is not the same after the total death, unless one becomes like Lucifer: the soul is so much strengthened in God, that it finds nothing on earth which contents it. A soul which left God after this state would become the most unfortunate in the world: For as it has tasted the ineffable delights of the divine union, it with its efforts could not find pleasure in the things on the outside, even if it did everything for that, because the pleasures of the senses from which it is far removed, would appear so insipid to it in comparison with the divine sweetness, that they would be a double torment to it. The soul would then be like in hell; because having been received in the heaven of the Divinity, and being rejected from it, either it would have to return to God, (which would be difficult) or it would have to become worse than the Devil. I believe that a person of this sort which is difficult to find, would become the most wretched of men; all the more wretched because he would have shared in divine goodness. Therefore one sees hardly any of these souls which fall; but it is from them who have only begun to go through the night of sense, and which not yet being dead to themselves or established in God, and these pleasures are so much deadened, that to find some which satisfy them, they fling themselves into all the disorders, and it is a miracle when these people are converted and return to God, because as they have taste God, and they have left him, all that they are told for their conversion is no longer new to them and no longer touches them. This is what I believe, that which is written (Hebrews 6:4-6), that it is impossible that a person, after having tasted the gift of God, to leave God is ever converted. But if it is difficult from souls of this degree, it is certainly so differently with the others; and I can say almost impossible, because they are like confirmed in a fixed state. Now the difficulty of falling from this fixed state is so great, that the pride of the Devil is necessary for that, and a malice from which the soul, which has arrived here, is certainly removed. However that can happen in rigor; and I believe that there are some, which, like the Angel, has been cast down from Heaven into hell: but it is certainly more difficult to return to God after such a fall. I believe it to be almost impossible, not on the part of God, who always gives the means to save ourselves; but because of the malice of such a soul, which is always more confirmed in its spitefulness. The loss of one of these souls, to speak in our way, is more painful to God than that of a million others; and the proportion of the love that God has marked out for them is the proportion of his eternal hatred. O my God it would be necessary to have a hell expressly for these ingrates who die in despair or in the final impenitence. This is my thought that I submit, like all the rest of my Writings. I put this here only to enlighten.] without allowing herself my natural satisfaction and without taking life either in self or in anything created. (Chapter 1 Verse 7)

She finds herself reduced to solitude all the more strange, because not finding her Husband; she cannot apply herself to anything. On the exterior everything is dead for her: it is this separation from all the created and from all which is not God, which makes up the beauty of this soul in the Husband's eyes. (Chapter 1 Verse 9)

The gentle, agreeable and pleasant State that you feel on the inside makes you believe that you have acquired everything for the outside: but imagine that the linings are of cypress, that the cypress, and that what you see as so beautiful and so decorated is prepared only for death. (Chapter 1, Verse 16)

As the winter deadens all things; in the same way, for this soul, has death passed onto all the exterior things such that there is nothing anymore, which can satisfy it. If something still appears, it is only a renewal of innocence, which has none of the spite of formerly.

The rains of winter have also passed; it can go forth without fearing winter any more, and with this advantage, that the winter has destroyed and killed that which was living for it formerly, and which would have made itself die: in the way that the harshness of winter purges the earth of insects. (Chapter 2, Verse 11)

Through recollection the soul lives and possesses itself; but through the exit from itself it dies and loses itself. (Chapter 2, Verse 14)

The marriage comes about when the soul finds itself dead and expired in the arms of the Husband, who seeing it more disposed, receives it in his union. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

As there are three kinds of interior slumbers, so does the Husband beseech three times, different occasions that his Beloved is not awaked. The first is a slumber of violent ecstasy, which is spread out onto the senses. He then begs that she not be woken; because this slumber is then appropriate, in that it helps to detach the senses from their objects to which they are attaching themselves impurely, and through this to even purify them.

The second is the slumber of [mystic] death where it expires in the arms of love. He does not want it to be woken either, until it wakes up itself by the effect of the all-powerful voice of God, who calls it from the tomb of death to the spiritual resurrection.

The third is the slumber of the repose in God. —

The first repose is the promised repose, the second is given repose, and the third a confirmed repose. (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

The love is strong like the death, in order to do what pleases him in his Mistress: he is strong like death, seeing that he makes it die to everything, so that it may live to him alone. (Chapter 8, Verse 6)

## AUTHORITIES

There is so much relation between the state of Purification and the state of Death that I will write down very little about this one.

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. If we were entirely dead to ourselves, and we were not so hampered on the inside, we would be able to then taste God and feel something of this heavenly joy that the contemplation of Divinity gives. (Book 1, Chapter 11, Section 3)
2. Be assured that your life must be accompanied by a continual death. The more a man dies to himself, the more he learns to live only for God alone. (Book 2, Chapter 12, Section 14)
3. Alas, the old man is still living in me; he is not yet crucified; he is not perfectly dead! (Book 3, Chapter 34, Section 3)

### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

4. Love took me back again, saying: I want you to close your interior eyes so much, that you cannot see me perform anything in you as if watching you; but I want you to be dead, and I want that in you all sight is annihilated however perfect it may be, and I do not want you to employ yourself in anything where you can feel or watch yourself, as if having any being.

If I had closed my mouth, remaining like an immobile thing, because the Love was clasping me on the inside, I felt such contentment and such interior peace, that I was unbearable to myself, and could only sigh, sob and moan without speaking and without caring about being on guard as the things were going, in such a way that it seemed to me that I was dead in myself; and yet love told me; it seems to you that you are unbearable to yourself: what do you have? If you have some feeling, you are still alive. I do not want you to sigh, or sob, or moan: but I want you to be like the dead, or like those who are ready to die. Finally, I do not want to see in you any sign of life. (*Life* Chapter 41)

5. Then being taken up again by love, I no longer performed any interior or exterior action which someone could take notice of: but when one spoke about something similar to what I felt in my soul, I listened attentively, hoping to hear something which would be fitting for me. –

It seemed to me that I could not do any less, especially when I looked at my Confessor, who understood well, in the face, at least it seemed to me, and I received a great relief. But Love said; [Infinite exactitude of the pure love which forgives nothing. It is a continual test. O if one could understand up to where its purity goes, and how it finds faults in the same things that we believe to be great virtues! Whoever does not know jealous, just, rigorous and exact love; does not know genuine purity, even though he may believe he has it.] Such seeing, such hearing, do not please me; because they are all excuses, resistances and flights from this correct part in order to not die. I no longer knew what to do or say to the subtle sights of this Love; which besieged me so strongly, that the human part could almost no longer taste any meat in accordance with its usual practice, so that I was eating almost nothing. One day I said to my Confessor; Must I force myself to eat, lest by my indiscretion I fall into some disadvantage, which harms the soul or the body? The love answered me interiorly, and the confessor exteriorly: No one need trouble himself about eating or not eating under the pretext of scruples; be quiet, be quiet, personal part, for I know you well and you cannot deceive me. When this personal part saw itself surprised in its spitefulness and property, and it could no longer deny its imperfections that Love had uncovered, it turned itself toward Love and said: [Despair of faith, brings about perfect confidence which is the entire surrender of self to God.] Since you have such a subtle eye and such great power; I give myself up to you, and even though my sensual part is very grieved by this, do according to your good-pleasure and will, which is to remove this miserable robe of self love from me, and clothe me in pure, clean, upright, strong, great, ardent and inflamed love. (*Life* Chapter 41)

6. See Purification Number 26.

### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

7. See Purification Number 39.
8. See Purification Number 40.

9. O gentle hand, all the more gentle to this soul, touching it gently, because you would be redoubtable to it, if you wanted to weigh a little on it; which would be enough to damage everyone; since with regard to you the earth trembles, nations quake, mountains are split. O yet again gentle hand, which as you were hard and vigorous to Job [Job 19:21], because you touched him so roughly, thus leaning on my soul very amiably and very graciously, to me you are [God does not kill in order to leave one in death, but to give a new life.] all the more gentle and sweet because you were so hard and severe with him, touching me more deliciously with a gentle love, because you hit him in a rough and severe way: for you kill and give life, and there is no one who escapes your hand; but you, o divine life, never kill [O it is indeed true! And those who do not deliver themselves to the pure rigorous love, do not taste the pure vivifying love!] except to vivify, as you harm only to cure. You broke my heart, o divine hand in order to fix it, you killed in me that which was keeping me dead without the life of God, in which I see myself now live. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 2, Verse 2)

10. There are two kinds of life: one is beatific and consists in seeing God; this one must be preceded by a natural and corporeal death, as St. Paul says [II Corinthians 5:1] We know that if our earthly house of this habitation is broken up, we have a building of God, a house not made by the hand of man, eternal in the Heavens. The other is a spiritual perfect life which is a possession of God through union of love, and this one is acquired by the mortification of all the vices and appetites; and until that is done, one cannot reach the perfection of this spiritual life of union with God [See Short Method (Chapter 24, Number 1) No one will see God and live.], according to what the same Apostle says: [Romans 8:13] If you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the spirit you mortify the works of the flesh, you will live. What the soul calls death, it is all the old-man, which is the use of the powers, namely of the memory, of the understanding and of the will, occupied and employed with the things of the world, and the appetites in the taste of the creatures. All that being the exercise of the former life, which is death to the new one, which is the spiritual one, in which the soul cannot live perfectly if it does not die entirely to the old-man, like the Apostle exhorts us to do, saying [Ephesians 4:22, 24 and Colossians 3:9-10] that one is stripped of the old man, one is reclothe in the new, who is created according to God in justice and holiness: in which new life, when one has reached the perfection of union with God, as we deal with all the affections of the soul, its powers and operations, which in themselves are base and imperfect, become as if divine; and considering that each person lives by his operation, as the Philosophers say, the soul having its operations in God, because of the union that it has with God, it lives from the life of God, and the death is changed into life. –

The soul is God through sharing: which happens in this perfect state of spiritual life, even though it is not as perfectly as in the other life. And so it indeed says: by killing you have changed death into life. From where it comes that the soul can certainly say with St. Paul: [Galatians 2:20] I do not live, but Jesus Christ lives in me: so what is dead and cold in this soul is changed into the life of God, the soul being absorbed into life, so that the word of the Apostle is achieved in it; [I Corinthians 15:54] Death is absorbed into victory; and what is in Hosea; [Hosea 13:14] O death I will be your death, says the Lord. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 2, Verse 6)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

11. St. Bernard: See Prayer Verse 2, Number 8.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

12. We speak about the death of men with a wholly particular propriety in our language of French, for we call it passing, and the dead who have passed away, meaning that death among men is only a passage from one life to the other, and that to die is nothing but passing beyond the confines of this mortal life in order to go to the immortal life. Certainly our will can never die. (See Non-Desire Number 34) (*On the Love on God* Book 9, Chapter 13)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

13. See Suffering Number 7.

14. There is a big difference between dying and being dead. Dying in detail, and little by little, one acquires the habits of virtues, especially humility, as dame and motive power for all the others, its inseparable companions. But when one is truly dead, one is in possession of all the same habits perfectly acquired and perfectly practiced in time and place. This is what the most excellent Mystics show in equivalent terms. They say that three [I believe I have written the same thing, or nearly, somewhere. (See the *Torrents* Part 1, Chapter 8, Numbers 4-5)] things suit the dead man, namely to be buried, that one may walk on him until the day of judgment, and that he may be reduced to ashes. These are the true dead men who are genuinely in possession and enjoyment of all the true good of the perfect [Viateur – This French word is in reference to the last sacrament and means the person who performs it or the act of performing it.]. As for the dying, as there is for them a high ascension to make, before arriving at the enjoyment of all good, and at their sentient and spiritual death in God, which is their own sepulcher; that makes it so that we must always speak more to these living men, not yet totally in death, than to those who are in truth dead. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 20)

15. See Annihilation Number 28.

16. Now pursuing what I said that a very low place is fitting to the dead man, in his esteem and in his feeling; I say that to be buried as if dead is yet a completely different state; and then to be [One certainly knows, speaking in harshness, that the soul does not die; or spoil. One cannot make use of a comparison which [quadrer] in everything: however it is certain that in the mystic death and annihilation one feels all the degrees which are applied to natural death, and to the total destruction of the parts of our body. (See the *Treatise of Torrents* Part 1, Chapter 8)] spoiled and corrupted, and from the spoiling to be reduced to ashes these are yet different states closer to the nothing. But the same NOTHING is nothing. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 22)

17. The Mystics tell us that three things are fitting for the dead man; that he be shrouded, that he be buried, and then that he be walked on until the day of judgment. One cannot express the insensitivity of dead bodies any better; and with this sign it will be seen if we are entirely dead to natures, if all these things are found in us fully and in every point true. That will be thus when men do with us, either by the instigation of devils, or on the part of God, all that they want, without that we engage in the least reflection upon ourselves, and that at this time and for eternity. It is therefore for me to indeed see if they are dead or dying, in that there is a very great distance between these two things. It is true that those who are in perpetual agony are very near death, like also is this hard agony more or less for a long time without dying at all, but I do not think that there are many men found in this age who are entirely dead; so that one can bear testimony that they are in accordance with what I said about dead bodies. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 12)

18. But in order to not vary from this state, in truth such a soul must make itself largely circumspect to not look for itself subtly, by making the death of the senses its prey. It must live there wholly lost to itself, without learning or sight of what it is in this noble state, for the sole good and pleasure of him that it wants to delight infinitely in its perpetual profound and living death, which makes it adhere truly, simply and totally to him. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 15)

19. As for what there is about the true dead about which I spoke earlier, Our Savior [These souls carry the states of Jesus Christ; and those things do not multiply the soul, and it is not diverted from his unity: for it is one object without object in entire loss.] must be their object in his passion, in his life and in his works very lovingly performed for our salvation; and that as God himself in his essence. For we must be the eternal imitators (followers) according to ourselves, of his works, sorrows, and heroic virtues, and that in our sight, learning and comprehension, in a simple and sur-eminent manner by which we see God and imitate him, living from him and in him, dead and lost to everything. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 4)

20. See Praise of God Number 2.

FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS

gives an account of

21. Blossius: Whoever aspires to contemplation, must work without respite toward general abnegation of all things and toward the death of self. (*Spiritual Institution* Chapter 1, Number 6) (5<sup>th</sup> Mystic Conference)

**END OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> PART (VOLUME)**

**THE JUSTIFICATIONS**

**BY: MADAME JEANNE GUYON**

**VOLUME: 2 OF 3**

**TRANSLATOR & PUBLISHER: PETER-JOHN PARISIS  
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THE JUSTIFICATIONS  
OF MADAME J.M.B. DE LA MOTHE-GUION  
WRITTEN BY HERSELF,  
AND SENT TO THE BISHOPS  
HER EXAMINERS  
WHERE SEVERAL DIFFICULTIES  
WHICH REGARD  
THE LIFE INTERIOR  
ARE ILLUMINATED  
IN THESE THREE VOLUMES  
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OF VOLUME 2**

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SECTION 38  
MORTIFICATION. EXTERIOR PENITENCE

SHORT METHOD

God to whom these souls keep themselves united, makes them practice all kinds of virtues: [Is there anything stronger than an always equal (steady) mortification, which excludes the most innocent satisfactions, joined with the austerities which are not spared? Thus it is easy to see that this prayer is not contrary to penitence; since this state demands not only mortification, but death to all things, which the consummation of mortification. It is true that one does not perform the essential part of mortification; but one does not abandon it for that, even though one may lose the practice of it because of the contracted habit and death, which leaves nothing to mortify.

It is easy to understand that true death is the consummation of all mortification: thus death to oneself is the most perfect mortification; because it is extended to all places and excludes nothing, either interiorly, or exteriorly; whereas mortification by attaching itself to only certain particular things certainly leaves many others mortified. Mortification or death follows the state of the soul. A person, who has only discursive divided up Meditation, has only a certain object mortification of particular things: whereas a soul led by naked faith has a jumbled and general knowledge, which understands them all without dividing up anything; thus its mortification, which is a true death, encloses all possible mortification, without envisioning any of them objectively. This is like trees that one meets on one's path, which serve as refreshment for the traveler, but under which he does not stop, always advancing toward his goal, which is God; whereas the other souls, though much less austere, make the trees their main point, stop there and do not pass beyond.] he endures nothing from them; he does not permit them the smallest pleasure.

What hunger do these loving souls have for suffering? To how many mortifications of the flesh would they deliver themselves, if they were allowed to act according to their desires?

They think only about what can please their Beloved. And they being to neglect themselves and love themselves less. The more they love their God, the more they hate themselves and the more disgust they have for creatures. (Chapter 9, Numbers 1-2)

I say moreover that it is almost impossible to ever arrive at the perfect mortification of the senses and the passions by another path.

The wholly natural reason is, that it is the soul, which gives strength and vigor to the senses: as it is the senses, which agitate and move the passions. A dead person no longer has either feeling or passion, because of the separation, which is made of the soul from the senses. All the work, which is done on the outside, always carries the soul more to the outside, in the things where it applies itself more strongly. It is into these that it is poured out more: being applied directly to austerity and to the outside, it is completely turned from that side, in such a way that far from deadening the senses the soul puts vigor in them.

For the senses can pull from vigor only the application of the soul, which communicates all the more life to them because it is more in them. Far from extinguishing passion, this life of the senses moves and agitates it: austerities can indeed weaken the body, but never entirely dull the sharp point of the senses, or their vigor for the reason that I just told.

Only one thing can do it; which is, that the soul by means of recollection turns itself wholly [This is what David says: (Psalms 58:10 {or Psalms 59:9 in the Kings James Version}) I will employ all my strength for you.] inside itself in order to be occupied only by God who is present there.

If it turns all its vigor and strength inside itself, it separates itself from the senses by this single action; and employing all its strength and vigor inwardly, it leaves the senses without vigor; and the more it advances toward and nears God, the more it is separated from itself. This is what makes the people in whom the lure of grace is strong, find themselves completely weak on the outside, and often fall into failure.

I do not mean by this that one need not mortify oneself. Mortification must always accompany prayer in accordance with the strengths, the state of each one, and obedience.

But I say that one does not have to make mortification one's principle exercise, or to settle in such and such austerities; but following only the interior attraction, and being occupied with the presence of God, without thinking of mortification in particular, God has some of all kinds done; and he gives no rest to the souls which are faithful in surrendering themselves to him, that he has mortified in them everything that there is to mortify.

One must [Because the soul attentive to God is instructed by him at every moment, about what it must do, in an admirable manner without respite.] therefore only keep oneself attentive to God, and all is done with much perfection. Everyone [One must be on guard that the people in whom the attraction is strong, must be stopped rather than pushed to austerities, without which they destroy their temperament absolutely, in that it is only with great pain that they can eat, which is necessary to sustain their life.] is not capable of exterior austerities, but everyone is capable of this.

There are two senses, which cannot be mortified, sight and hearing; because it is those who form all the species: God has it done; one must but follow his spirit.



By this conduct the soul has a double advantage, which is, in proportion to it pulling itself from the outside, it approaches closer to God; and in nearing God, besides it being communicated a secret strength and virtue which sustain and preserve it, it is also distanced all the further from sin, because it approaches more closely to God; and it is then in a habitual conversion. (Chapter 10)

#### CANTICLE

When the Wife, or rather the Mistress (for she is not yet a Wife) has found the Husband, she is so transported with joy that she would at first like to be united to him. But the union of continual enjoyment has not yet arrived. He is mine, she says, I cannot doubt that he will not give himself to me at this very moment; since I feel him: but he is mine like a bouquet of myrrh. He is not yet like a Husband, that I must embrace in his nuptial bed, but only like a bouquet of crosses, of pains, and of mortifications; like [Exodus 4:25] a Husband of Blood, and a crucified Lover, who wants to test my fidelity by giving me a good part of his sufferings: for this is what he then gives to that soul.

In order to [I already said that the true mortification of this state consists of an entire death. Whoever is dead is indeed more mortified; in the way that it was seen in the previous article. Mortification is for the active path, and death for the passive.] nevertheless make the advancement of this soul, already heroic, she does not say, my Beloved will give me the bouquet of the Cross; but he himself will be this bouquet; for all my crosses will be those of my Beloved. The bouquet will be between my breasts; as a sign that he must be for me a Husband of bitterness, for the outside as well as for the inside. The exterior crosses are of little importance when they are not accompanied by interior ones: and the interior ones are made much more sorrowful by the union with the exterior ones. But although the soul perceives only the cross from all sides, it is however her Beloved who is himself this cross; and he was never more present to her than in this bitterness, during which he remains in the middle of her heart. (Chapter 1, Verse 12)

#### AUTHORITIES

##### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

1. The Annihilation being done, the vigor and the operation of corporeal feelings are lost in this way. Firstly, it can no longer see anything on the earth which gives it either pleasure or pain: for if it sees something which in its nature gives pain or pleasure, it does not rejoice in it and is not saddened by it: because the soul being transformed into God, he does not let it correspond with the bodily feelings: but little by little he lets them all die without having any compassion for them: in such a way that even though it may look at something, the soul can no longer understand it by bodily taste, and cannot reason how the things please men. And when it hears: that is beautiful or good, it no longer understands what beauty or goodness is.

[Non-Desire Number 7] It is the same way for all the other feelings: and thus [This operation is for a long enough time very painful; then everything becomes easy and as if natural.] all their tastes are without flavor, and all their desires being mortified and extinguished, it feels peace as great as it can understand: And because the soul and the body are alienated from their natural operations, they live as if by strength: it seems to them [She is still speaking about the feelings.] that they are in Hell, because they no longer hope to get away from this occupation which is destroying them, or hope to live according to their nature, and if they could speak, they would say to God: How much better would it be for us to die than to live in this annihilation? But the supernatural state in which God places this creature, is of such great force that it can no longer make a state either of the life of the soul, or of the death of the body, no more than if it had no soul or body. (*Life* Chapter 31)

2. See Annihilation Number 15.

3. God then keeps the soul so recollected in itself, that the body remains abandoned without any delight; and the soul remains fixed in its recollection and in peace, and is not concerned with its body, except in extreme necessity.

God keeping this creature thus consumes all its ill-natured instincts, and finally the soul puts the body to its subjection, without it being more rebellious to the soul. Then they make peace together and are content with each other; the body by correspondence with the soul enjoys some of the sweetness of its peace through sharing, though it may be reduced to this necessity.

For just as the soul being separated from the body, does the body die; so [This state becomes as if it were habitual: this is what I wrote or something approaching this in the Pentateuch (Exodus 14:21-22 & 15:22-23 & Leviticus 26:25) about the division of the two parts and their reunion.] withdrawing the operations of the soul from the things of the earth and from the body, does the body remain like a bird without feathers which wants to fly, and even less: for it remains as if without feelings, and it is reduced into such a great mortification that it does not know if it is dead or alive. The soul then being as if without a body, because it attracts to itself all the corporeal feelings, it is shocked that creatures can be found which can delight in something other than God. It is horrified by all kinds of sins in general; because the fire of love consumed [God himself consumes our malicious inclinations and gives us a genuine

hatred for sin.] all the moods of the bad habits; [Annihilation Number 16] and even the [Perfect conversion, or habit of conversion: the body is subjugated to the spirit as our spirit is subjugated to God. As the disobedience of Adam, by making his soul go forth from the faithful dependence on his Creator, made his body rebel against his spirit; so is that which can truly subjugate the body to the spirit, this submission without limits, this dependence on God, this death of our will: for it re-establishes man in the order of his creature in some manner. But as Adam himself was not without stain in earthly Parades, even though it was very easy for him to not sin, because his senses were subject to reason, and reason to God: so is the man who has arrived here also not without stain, even though it is easy for him to not sin, because of the habit of doing good. As one sees a person used to doing bad says, that he can no longer prevent himself from committing sin, and from even conserving the desire for crime when ages takes away the ability to sin; so also does a soul used to the good find that the bad has become so foreign to it, that it no longer finds in it any correspondence or ability for the pleasures for which the feelings are mortified or dead. Moreover, the love of God, by an ineffable feeling, consumes these coarse feelings in self, like a big fire consumes a little fire, and a big light absorbs a small sparkle. If I am talking evil, I still submit this.] body comes to such a point of annihilation of its natural being, used to evil, that although the soul let it perform in its own fashion, he can yet no longer do anything other than what the soul wants; and so it remains outside of its wicked being, consenting in everything without any rebellion against the soul, which being attentive [The soul attentive to God does not correspond with the natural feelings: quite the opposite it makes its body to share of its purity. All this supports what is said in the *Short Method* Chapter 10 on Mortification.] to God, and no longer obeying the body either for love of it or delight in it, the body must inevitably lose its vigor. (*Life* Chapter 32)

4. Firstly with regard to the soul, (says Our Lord), my love has such great delights for it, that it consumes all other pleasure and all other joy that man can have in this world; my taste deadens all other taste; my light blinds all those who see it: all the feelings of the soul are so seized and bound in this life, that they do not know where they are, or what they are; they are aware of neither what they did, nor what they must do and the soul is as if outside of itself, without reason, without memory and without will. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 7)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

The first thing that the Blessed John of the Cross proposes to us, is the kind of Enigma, where there are three paths, the one which is in the middle is far above the others, which he calls the perfect state. This Enigma is the argument of his whole Book. On the right hand he puts the path of the imperfect spirit, which never arrives at the top of the mountain; and on the left hand the path of the lost spirit. Here is what he says about the imperfect spirit.

5. The soul which keeps to the right dressed in clothes [Since this soul is an imperfect state, the mortification is not therefore a perfect state.] of penance, which has its face and hands turned toward the mountain, represents the one which indeed, or at least in affection and in will, quits the goods of the earth, being occupied only in the goods of heaven, that God communicates to it abundantly. Sometimes His Majesty gives it lights to know some truth; at other times he attracts it with consolations; at other times he overwhelms it with joy, and often he gives it a tranquility of conscience which seems to give it security, and with that the soul already thinks it enjoys glory in advance. But it finds itself well removed from its reckoning, in that being bound by several fine threads, which [One must be purified of the attachment to the supernatural good.] attaches it to these spiritual goods, it always remains in a same state, and in the path of an imperfect spirit, so well that it cannot reach this divine union: and so it experiences the same hindrance as the remora [very small sucking fish] brings to a great ship, stopping it short; because this disordered affection prevents this soul from reaching the top of the mountain, as it confesses: the more I delay and the less I climb, for not having taken the path. Abundantly, as punishment for the infidelity that the spiritual soul commits, attaching itself to these supernatural goods, God deprives it of all of them; as it confesses by these words; For having procured them I had less than if I had climbed by the path. (*Explanation of the Enigma*)

6. There is much to say concerning spiritual gluttony: because there is hardly a beginner however virtuous he may be, who does fall into some imperfection, which are in great quantity, -- in that several of these people who have become fond of the delicacies of the taste and flavor that they find in these exercises procure the flavor of the spirit rather than purity and true devotion, which is what God regards and accepts in the whole spiritual path. That is why, besides the imperfection that these beginners have in claiming these flavors, greediness makes them leave from the foot to the hand, which is to say, they go from one extremity to the other, passing the limits of the surroundings, where the virtues consist and are acquired. Because some attracted and enticed by the taste that they find them, kill themselves with penance, and others are weakened by fasts, doing more than their strength permits, without any order or advice from the others: on the contrary they hid themselves from he whom they must obey in such cases; and there are still some, who are bold enough to do it, even though they have been ordered to the contrary: These people are very imperfect and humans without reason, who leave behind subjection and obedience, which is the penitence of reason and discretion. That is why this sacrifice is to God more agreeable than all the others of corporeal penitence, which (without the other) is very imperfect, being pushed to that only by the taste and appetite that they find there. In which, all

extremes are vicious, and that in this way of proceeding all do their will, they increase in vices rather than in virtues. For at least in this way they acquire spiritual gluttony and pride, since they do not walk in obedience; and the Devil, provoking this gluttony with tastes and appetites that he increases for them, deceives several of them so much that not being able to do more, either they change, or add, or vary what they are ordered to do; because any obedience is hard and too restrictive for them: In which some arrive at such evil, that because these exercises are done by obedience, they lose the desire and devotion to do them, having no other will, except to do the things to which they are moved and pushed by taste, although perhaps it would be better to do nothing at all.

You will see several of these souls being very persistent with their spiritual Masters, so that they will accord them what they want, and they obtain it half by force; otherwise they are saddened like children, and walk in regret, and it seems to them that they are not serving God, when they do not allow them to do what they desire. For as they lean on taste and their own will, as soon as these things are taken away from them and one wants to put them in the will of God, they are saddened, let go and fall into a lapse. These ones think that to have tastes and to be content is to serve God and please him. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 6)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

7. One must not conclude from this, as some infer wrongly, that this learning [Destroying mortification was ascribed to the Blessed John of the Cross.] condemns the path – of acquiring the mortification and the virtues in their beginnings, through means which concern and dependent on the sensitive and the reasonable, and by what in the supernatural order can be said to be acquired, because he intervenes in many of our discourses, work and industry, even though it is helped and super naturalized by God. That is proven by what the Blessed John of the Cross says, that one must follow this path, until there are signs that Our Lord wants to make the soul pass to a more simple and supernatural view or contemplation, about which signs he speaks with dignity. (In Chapters 13 & 14 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> book of the *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*) Secondly, because if the perfect state, which he undertakes to tread, is superior and exclusive of that path, like that which is the more accomplished does with that which is the less so, it is quite evident that whoever treads this perfect state must not approve this other path for himself: and when it is improved for those who are already extremely advanced, and near the unitive life, or who have already arrived there, it is not to improve it absolutely; just as he who says, that bread with the crust is given to the child who has teeth, and that the child is weaned, for all that does not take away the breast from the child who was just born; comparison that [Hebrews 5:12-14] St. Paul makes use of. (*Notes and Remarks on John of the Cross* in the Introduction)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

8. Everything that I have said shows how much these men are rare, little known, tasted and followed, even by all those who seem to be greatly excellent and exalted in holiness in the eyes of men. For most of these men know only their bodies, austerity; and even the others who are much better in mind, because of the touches they received from God, take the apparent for the true, and the shadow for the truth. So the true friends of God known only by their peers (those like them); and their nature is to be hidden as much as possible for them, according to what the true renounced life demands. Whoever is able to understand this, will understand it; if not he will let it be what it is; like all my writings. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 11)

9. If man is not courageous in this time of desolation, to believe what he is told, and also to bear this whole mortal state by a strong and consistent suffering, he will fall from the excellence of his state, returning [He is speaking about the state of trial: he does not want the soul to then return to its penance, because through it would be avoiding the Justice of God, which is infinitely more harsh than all the austerities. This is of extreme consequence. I knew a person who not by infidelity, but as if by an excess of torments filled himself in order to make a diversion, but God did not permit the melted lead, which should have lost him, do him any harm. (See the *Life* of the Author Part 1, Chapter 17, Section 3, and Chapter 19, Section 1 and Chapter 21, Number 7) To do austerities is not a remedy for the temptations either; that agitates them: one must bear them until it pleases God to deliver one, which he does by his goodness, when he sees that we are awaiting help from him alone.] little by little into himself, and again taking up his exterior exercises in order to afflict his body, which seems to him to cause this war and this revolt: in which he will be extremely deceived; and instead of finding his strength and his repose in it, he will feel more attacked than ever. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 13)

10. You must not make a big case of your exercises, if they do not surpass what nature does easily in men of common run, who are of a natural disposed only toward certain things consistent with their appetite of self excellence: For example, to just pray out loud and even in one's mind, to visit Churches, to give alms to the poor, to even take the scourge, to mortify oneself to their fantasy, to keep vigil for a long time, all other such things, in which the nature takes its pleasure, because of the good for it which must result from this. One recognizes those who are of this temperament, in that they know and want to know only that, without ever passing beyond these practices; being ignorant and totally blind in the knowledge and to the works of the supernatural subjects, which make the soul rest uniquely in God and which always brings it to sovereignly purify, strip and perfect its love. These people know only the senses and

animalist, and everything which is worse than the sensuality of their spirit, their soul and all their powers, in the tastes, lights, attractions and other sensory gifts of God; which having misused for a long time, they attach themselves to with a greediness either coarse, or subtle, similar to the one that beasts have for their pasture, where their appetite brings them by necessity. That can be deplored enough in a soul chosen among a thousand for great things, I mean, to sovereignly enjoy God in this life in supreme liberty. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 18, Section 13)

11. There is nothing like the continual loss of oneself, accompanied by good order and savory discretion, with a continual application to that of understanding and will: in such a way however, that acts from the bottom of the spirit, by a gentle activity, rather than by abandonment and effort of the head and the senses. That is why it is even necessary, to rule one's austerities and afflictions of the body, so that one may be more suitable on the inside, and so that the soul may not be wholly converted, reflective and attentive to the torments of one's body. You can nevertheless use them; but with such order and discretion, that they do not cause you any obstacles on the interior. For the free introversion in its depths, perfectly acquired and experienced, is the royal path to reach God, and the most excellent good, if it is [Note without property] without property, which can think about itself. The perfectly abstracted life is known and practiced only by few people, and great men are found, who by default of exerting themselves well in this, are very multiplied and multiplied on the outside, full of formalities and attached to each little straw. (Letter 50)

## SECTION 39 DIVINE MOTION

### SHORT METHOD

Some people hearing about the Prayer of silence falsely persuaded themselves, that the soul remains there stupid, dead and without action.

But it is certain that it acts there more nobly, and with more extent (range) than it ever did up to this degree; since it is moved by God himself, and that it acts by its Spirit. St. Paul wants that we let ourselves [Romans 8:14] be moved by the Spirit of God.

It is not said that one must not act; but that one must act by dependence on the movement of grace. This is admirably figured in Ezekiel. This Prophet saw, he says, [Ezekiel 1:19-21] wheels, which had the spirit of life, and they went where this spirit led them. They were raised and lowered according to where they were moved; for the spirit of life was in them: but they never retreated. The soul must be like this; it must let itself be moved and carried by the vivifying spirit which is in it, following the movement of its action, and not following any other of them. Now this movement never brings it to draw back; that is to say, to reflect on the creature, or to bend back against itself; but to always go before it, incessantly advancing toward its end.

This action of the soul is an action full of repose. – When it acts by itself, it acts with effort; that is why it distinguishes its action better. But when it acts through dependence on the spirit of grace, its action is so free, so easy and so natural, that it seems that it is not acting. – The more it is in peace, the more it runs with speed, because it surrenders itself to the Spirit which moves it and makes it act.

This spirit is nothing other than God who attracts us, and by attracting us makes us run to him. (Chapter 21, Numbers 1-3)

Our action must therefore be, to put us in a state of enduring the action of God, and to give room for the Word to trace its image in us. And image, which would be moved, would prevent the painter from making a painting on it. All the movements that we perform by our own spirit prevent this admirable Painter from working, and have false traits made. We must therefore remain in peace, and not be moved except when he moves us. [John 5:26] Jesus Christ has life in himself. And he must communicate the life to everything, which must live.

The spirit of divine motion is the spirit of the Church. The Church; is it idle, sterile and unfertile? It acts; but it acts through dependence on the Spirit of God, which moves it, and governs it.

Now the spirit of the Church must not be different in its member than it is in itself. Its members in order to be in the Spirit of the Church must be in the spirit of divine motion.

That this action may be more noble is an incontestable thing. It is certain that the things have no value, that as much as the principle from which they come is noble, great and exalted. The actions done by a divine principle, [See John of the Cross, Acts Number 5, Center Number 3] are divine actions; whereas the actions of the creature however good they seem, are human actions, or at the very most virtuous when they are done with grace. (Chapter 21, Numbers 5-6)

One must therefore inevitably enter this path of divine motion and the Spirit of Jesus Christ. St. Paul says, that [Romans 8:9] nobody is in Jesus Christ if he does not have his Spirit. In order to then be in Jesus Christ, we must let ourselves be filled by his Spirit, and be emptied of our own: it must be evacuated. St. Paul in the same passage [Verse 14] proves to us the necessity of this divine motion. All those, he says, who are led by the Spirit of God, are children of God.

The spirit of divine filiations is therefore the spirit of divine motion: that is why the same Apostle continues. The Spirit that you have received is not a spirit of servitude, which makes you live in fear; but it is the Spirit of the children of God, through whom we cry out: Abba, our Father. This spirit is none other than the Spirit of Jesus Christ, through whom we share in his filiations: and this spirit itself bears testimony to ours, that we are children of God.

As soon as the soul lets itself be moved to the Spirit of God, it feels the evidence of this divine filiations in itself; and it is this evidence which over fills it all the more with joy, and makes it know better that it is called to the freedom of the children of God; and that the spirit that it received, is not a spirit of servitude, but of freedom. –

The spirit of divine motion is so necessary for all things, that St. Paul in the same place found this necessity on our ignorance in the things that we ask for. (Chapter 21, Numbers 9-10)

This is the conduct that we must keep in our interior, and by acting in this way we will advance more in a short time by divine motion, than in every other way by many efforts of self. –

One must therefore surrender oneself to the Spirit of God, and let oneself be led by his movements. (Chapter 22, Numbers 8-9)

## CANTICLE

He wants moreover, that as the Mistress must in all freedom follow the attraction of the Holy Spirit for everything which is of his interior, she also complies with the uses of the Church, and with the orders of the Superiors, in all which regards her exterior: which is well indicated by walking on the trails of herds, which is to say, in a common live for the exterior. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. [If the very first movement of the soul toward divine things is love, it is therefore good and well to lead the souls with love.] The very first movement toward divine things is the love of God; and the first advancement of holy charity, to put the divine commandments in execution. It is that mystic and ineffable operation, which makes us, have a divine being. On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy Chapter 1)
2. What do the Theologians mean, when sometimes they call it Love and charity, sometimes lovable and cherishing? That is because of the first he is the author, the producer and the progenitor; and as for the other it is himself, which is such: [Center Number 1] Through love he himself is moved, through being lovable he moves the others; or even because it is he himself who is produced and who excites the others to self. In this way they call him lovable and cherished, as if being beautiful and good: and of the other they name it love and charity, because it has a strength and virtue moving and attracting to self, and because it alone is good and beautiful by itself, and that he himself has the strength to express himself and to be declared by himself, and that he goes forth by a loving movement outside of this excellent union sequestered from all things, remaining nevertheless in his simplicity which is moved by itself, and which acts and operates by himself: and which movement of love is firstly and before being elsewhere, in the good, and of the good is infused and overflows [This is completely the business of the interior: we have gone forth from God; we must return to him.] onto all the beings, and from them returns yet again to the good. In which the divine Love excellently shows that it is without beginning and without end, [Admirable] like a certain eternal circle, which spins and turns without ever going off its route. (Divine Names Chapter 4)
3. Henry Suso: See Consistency Number 6.
4. Rusbroche: God gives us a life above us which is a divine life: It consists in contemplating God, and remaining attached to him by a simple and naked love, in tasting him, in enjoying him, in flowing out into him by love. When being raised above reason and all our own operation we enter into this naked regard, there we are moved by the Spirit of God, we sustain the operation of God, and we are filled with his divine clarity, like the air is penetrated by the clarity of the Sun and the iron by the ardor of the fire. (Seven Guards Chapter 17)
5. St. Catherine of Genes: See Annihilation Number 12.

### ST. TERESA

6. It seems to me that the Holy Spirit is then the mediator between God and the soul, and that it is he who moves it with such ardent desires, that he makes light the sovereign fire which it is so near to. (Concept of the Soul of God Chapter 5)

## THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

7. In that the virtues, as moral as Theological, are infused to the soul in order to act in accordance with human reason, the soul in this state is guided above this reason by the extraordinary motions of the Holy Spirit, because those transformed and united to God, are the true children of God; and as such they are pushed in their operations by the Spirit of God, in the way that the Apostle says: [Romans 8:14] Whoever is moved by the Spirit of God, is a child of God: joined with that in this state the soul leads a divine life, which can be exercised only by a divine principle, which is the Holy Spirit. – Now in order to receive these extraordinary motions of the Holy Spirit, the soul must be disposed to them, since as the School says, *Omne movetur, necesse est proportionatum esse motori*: which is done by the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to the soul to receive its particular instincts. It is for that you see them named on the Mountain on the right side, wisdom, learning, strength, counsel, understanding, piety, and the fear of God. (Explanation of the Enigma)
8. See Acts Number 5.

9. See Ecstasy Number 6.

10. See Center Number 3.

11. The will, which beforehand loved tepidly, is presently changed in the life of divine love; because it loves nobly, with affection for divine love, moved by the Holy Spirit, in which it already lives. –

Finally all the movements and operations that beforehand the soul had from the principle of its natural and imperfect life, are already changed into this union in movements of God: in that the soul, as the true daughter of God, is already moved by his Spirit, as St. Paul says: [Romans 8:14] Those who are moved by the Spirit of God, are children of God: And the substance of their soul, although it may not be the substance of God, because it cannot be converted into him, nevertheless being united with him, and absorbed into him, is God through sharing: which happens in this perfect state of spiritual life, even though it may not be as perfectly as in the other life. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 2, Verse 6)

12. See Acts Number 8.

13. The soul therefore taking care, that God in this affair is the principle agent, who must direct and guide it by the hand to where it cannot go without him, namely, to the supernatural things, which to know how they are, neither its understanding, nor its will, nor its memory cannot achieve; all its principle care must be to watch to not put any obstacles in the way of the guide, which is the Holy Spirit, in the path through which it leads the soul, which is given in the law of God and in faith as we have said. This hindrance will come to it, if the soul lets itself be guided by another blind person: and the blind that could pull it from the path are the Spiritual Father, the Devil; and the soul itself. As for the first, the soul which wants to profit and not retreat, must watch very well in whom it confides itself; for such as the master is, so will be the disciple; such as is the Father, so is the son; because for these such exalted things and even for the mediocre ones, the soul will hardly find any capable guide. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 4)

14. May such people take care and consider, that the Holy Spirit is the principle agent and motive of these souls, which is never loses the care of, nor that which concerns their profit, and which serves to near them to God more quickly and by better means; and they are not the agents but only the instruments. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 9)

15. Now it is a marvelous thing how this movement is performed in the soul, God being immobile; for without God moving, the soul is introduced and moved by him, and with a certain admirable newness this divine life is uncovered for it, and the being and the harmony of all the creatures, the cause taking the name of the effect that it produces. According to which effect one can say that God moves, like the Sage says that the [Wisdom 7:24 & 27] Wisdom is more mobile than all mobile things; not that it moves, but because it is the principle and the root of all movement, and remaining stable in self, as he says, immediately after it renews [See *Short Method* Chapter 24, Numbers 3-4, & 6] all things. And so what he says there is the Wisdom is more active than all the active things. Consequently we must say here, that the soul in this movement is the one, which is moved, and awoken, and consequently that is properly named with the name of awakening. But God always remains in the same state that the soul saw him in, moving, governing and giving the being, virtue, graces and gifts to all creatures, having them all in self virtually, presently and very eminently, the soul seeing what God is in self, and what he is in the creatures. As he who has the opening of a palace, sees all of a sudden the eminence of the person who is inside, and together with what he does. And so, according to what I can understand, the manner or way in which this awakening and sight of the soul is done, is that God pulls back some of the veils and curtains among the several that the soul has in front of its eyes, so that it can see what he is; and then one discerns and catches a glimpse of (though obscurely, in so far as not all veils are removed) this divine face full of grace, which as it moves all things by its virtue, together with it appears everything that it does: and that is the awakening of the soul. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 4, Verse 1)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

16. St. Thomas: The spiritual man is not only instructed by the Holy Spirit to know what he must do, but his heart is also moved by the same Spirit; and consequently one must understand more in what is said: All those who are moved by the Holy Spirit; for those things, which are pushed by a certain superior instinct, are said to be moved; from where it comes that we say about the beasts, that they do not govern or rule themselves, because they are moved by nature to perform their actions, and not by their own movement. Now similarly the spiritual man is inclined to do something, not principally by the movement of his own will, but by the instinct of the Holy Spirit, according to what Isaiah says [Isaiah 59:19], when he whom the Holy Spirit pushes will have become like a rapid river: and in St. Luke it is said, that [Luke 4:1], Jesus Christ was impelled by the Spirit in the desert. By that one however does not exclude that spiritual men do

not operate by the [All the free things which are moved, correspond to the movement by letting themselves be moved willingly; and the consent is an action: moreover being agitate, they are strongly moved as is said in *Short Method* (See Chapter 21, Number 4)] will and free will; because the Holy Spirit brings about in them this movement of the will and the free will, in accordance with what the Apostle says [Philippians 2:13] to the Philippians: It is God who performs the will and the accomplishment in you. (One Romans 8:14 Lesson 13) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

17. One must nevertheless consider that if virtue, which is the principle of action, is moved by a superior virtue, the operation which proceeds from it not only is an action, but also a passion as long as it comes from a virtue which is moved by a superior one. (In Question 1 about the *Union of the Word*, Article 6) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

18. St. Prosper: Without a doubt it is more to be pushed, than to be guided; for he who is governed does something, for that he is governed in order to do well. Now he who is moved, hardly is it conceived that he acts; and the grace of the Holy Spirit confers so much on our wills, that the Apostle does not fear saying; [Romans 8:14] All those who are impelled by the Spirit of God, they are children of God: and the free will can do nothing better in us than to recommend itself to he who cannot do bad. (*Sentences of St. Augustine* Number 30) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

19. Cajetan: When you read; Those who are pushed by the Holy Spirit; take care to understand it with a kind of fury, lest you think that men are pushed by the Spirit of God like fools; but it is that by him is rendered such a great obedience to the Holy Spirit, living in perfect men, that obedient they are ruled by it, being very supple and very submissive to the Holy Spirit living in them. Now not only is he who is ignorant of that moved, but also so is he who obeys very promptly. (On Romans 8:14) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

20. Tolete: To be pushed by the Spirit of God is to do one's works according to the Spirit, of which the motive and the first author is the Spirit of God, living in the just by grace, the virtues and the gifts. (On Romans 8:14) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

21. Rede: Someone will say to me; One therefore acts in us, and we do not act. I respond, that you act and that one acts in you, and that then you act even when a good [spirit] acts in you; for the Spirit of God which acts in you, helps you in acting: (which words he drew from St. Augustine) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

22. Benedict Justinian: We are therefore led and pushed; but we lend our consent, and correspond freely to divine motion: the Apostle nevertheless likes to speak better in this fashion, in order to show the force and the efficiency of divine grace. (On the same words.) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

23. St. Augustine: May they understand that they are children of God, that they are pushed by the Spirit of God, so that they may do what must be done; and that after having done it, they give favors back to he who moved them and brought them to do it: For they are moved in order to do, and not to remain doing nothing. (*On Correctness and Grace* Chapter 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

24. St. Teresa: I sufficiently explained this manner of prayer, and what the soul must do, or to say it better, what God does in it; for it is he who already performs the office of gardener, and who wants it to rejoice: the will lends only its consent to this grace which it enjoys, and must offer itself to everything that true wisdom would like to perform in it. (*Life* Chapter 17) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

25. Father Bartelemy of the Martyrs: This is not a divine operation, but only a divine one; for there God himself is acting, and man suffering. – And even though this fervent direction is produced by the will, it is nevertheless said to be passive, because the will is not excited to it like to the first one, but it is immediately excited by God. (*Abridgement* Part 2, Chapter 11) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 5)

26. St. Francis of Sales: See Non-Desire Number 35.



## MONSIEUR OLIER

27. The Wife no longer having any power over itself, since it is transferred into the total domain of the Husband, must live so absolutely in his subjection that she acts only according to his desires and by his movements. She must be like Jesus Christ with respect to his Father, who did nothing except live absolutely according to his orders (will); in such a way that his operation was so much united with his Father, and animated by his own operation, that it was a simple and one same thing. What redemption, what freedom, what submission, what abandonment to the Spirit must there be in a soul to always act in concert with him! (Letter 12)

28. I pray Our Lord to fill you with the Spirit of his holy childhood. – To be a child is to have no human prudence and wisdom, and to go where the obedience and the movement of the Holy Spirit carries you. The child goes everywhere he is lead without turning back; and the children of God goes everywhere his Spirit guides them. They do not amuse themselves in looking to see if what they are doing is according to the laws of the world, and if it is accordance with its customs; but contenting themselves with the wisdom of faith, which is the wisdom of God himself, that he gives to his children as a rule and us light, they purely and without turning back surrender themselves to his holy guidance: they in this way avoid all the confusion of human light, which by its impurity often extinguishes God's light in us. –

Here is what is the conduct of the children of God, possessed by his divine Spirit, which wholly children that they are, have one wisdom a thousand times more solid, more severe and more ordered than everyone together, since they have the wisdom of faith, which is the wisdom of God himself, as a rule and as light.

Now not only does this spirit of childhood give light to the soul in order to guide it in everything, but it still gently gives a shaking to the will, in order to do what God wants. (Letter 59)

SECTION 40  
NAKEDNESS. OBSCURE (DARK) FAITH.

CANTICLE

Here one enjoys God in the night of Faith, where one has the happiness of enjoyment, without having the pleasure of the sight of him: whereas in the other life one will have clear vision of God with the happiness of possessing him. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

As there is much written about laying bare, I believed it was necessary to say something here, even though it was almost not even mentioned in to two other Books; because I am more comfortable giving light to as many things as possible.

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. See Conversion Number 2.
2. See Naked Faith Number 3.

THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. It is rare among spiritual people to find one who is truly laid bare of everything. Where will the poor in spirit be, freed from the love of the creatures? One must go to the ends of the earth in order to find this precious pearl. (Book 2, Chapter 11, Section 4)
4. When a man is such as we just said, he will be truly poor in spirit, laid bare of everything; he will be able to say with the Prophet: [Psalms 24:16 (or 25:16 KJV)] I am poor and abandoned. And it will be true at the same time, that there is no man either richer, or more powerful, or more free than him; knowing in this way how to separate himself from everything and from himself, and how to always put himself below all the others. (Book 2, Chapter 11, Section 5)
5. See Property Number 4.
6. Aspire to this great good; so that being stripped of all property, you may be able to follow Jesus Christ naked on the cross, and that being dead to yourself, you may live with him eternally. (Book 3, Chapter 37, Section 5)

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

7. Naked love sees only the truth, which being by its nature communicable to all, cannot belong to any. (In Her *Life* Chapter 25)
8. See Purification Number 18.
9. When the soul could love and return to God love for love, this love left it a certain flavor from which it still lived: but this active and reciprocal love being taken away from the soul, the humanity remains without rigor. And abandoned as if dead: And for them God gives to the soul another loving operation, which is so subtle and so hidden, that the work which is done in the soul remains much more noble and perfect than the first one; because of the deprivation and the nakedness that God gives to it: there remains no more nourishment for it, except for a firm and stable force in God. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 10)
10. What will you do o soul thus naked and stripped? And you, o heart and spirit, what will you do, thus empty? Where are you in this state, which you have no knowledge of? (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 12)
11. I departed from my subject, and I did not follow the discourse (speech) that I was making about the nakedness of the spirit; because no terms can be found to express the state of true nakedness; and the soul finding itself in this nakedness, has a fullness in the spirit, about which it cannot speak: and yet because of the vehemence that it endures from this so naked love [It is to be noted that obscure (dark) faith is always accompanied by naked love, and the distinct states of felt and understood love.], it is restrained from speaking. ((*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 12)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

12. It is said in the Explanation of his Enigma, that the greatness of contemplation must be measured by the greatness of deprivation.

13. In order to look for God, one must have a heart laid bare and free from all the evils, and from all the goods which is not purely God, or which do not lead one to God. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 3)

14. This transformation into God shapes the soul in such a way with its simplicity and purity, that it leaves it clean, pure and empty of all the forms and figures that it had beforehand, like the Sun [Admirable comparison which expresses, how a soul, which appeared completely pure in the first interior touches, seems dirty and full of faults. These are the same stains and not new ones, as it believes: But it is that as the presence of the Sun of justice conceals our faults from us, its absence in the stripping makes them be seen once again, and which all the more pain because one believed oneself to be more pure.] does in the window: for diffusing his light there, he makes it clear, and conceals from view all the stains which appeared there before; but when the Sun draws back and distances itself from that, these stains see themselves there like before. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

15. One must firstly know that these cares of the powers, when they are not clean and purged of all affection for the creature, do not feel the great emptiness of their profound capacity; because in this life the slightest thing which attaches itself suffices to keep them so perplexed and transported that they do not feel their loss, and do not watch for the immense good that they lack, or know their capacity: and it is a wonderful thing that being capable of infinite goods, the least are capable of confusing them in such a way, that they cannot perfectly receive them, until they have executed themselves from all points, as we will soon say. But when they are empty and clean, the thirst, hunger and anxiety of the spiritual sense are intolerable. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 1)

The whole Book of the Dark Night speaks only about this nakedness.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

16. See Faults Number 12.

17. If one denuded oneself of the old affection for spiritual consolations, exercises of devotion, the practice of virtues, indeed even for our own advancement in perfection; one must reclothe oneself in a completely new different affection, loving all these heavenly graces and favors, no longer, because they perfect and decorate our spirit, but because the Name of the Lord is sanctified by it, because his Kingdom is enriched by it and his good-pleasure glorified. (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 16)

18. Brother John of St. Samson: See Abandonment Number 25.

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

19. This soul having surrendered everything to its God, his being and the capacity of his being; all its pleasure is to let him do in it and through it all which will please him, through darkness or through light, through rejections or through caresses, through deprivations or through abundance; remaining tranquil in the restlessness of the senses, in the uprising of the passions, in obscurities and in temptations, in view and through the respect for he who is and who operates all things in it, depending on whether he hears it and wants it, by the motive of his good-pleasure, following it in everything; loving all the states that he operates there, even the most obscure and bare, and adhering to it for then through a mystic repose, which is to say, by acts not deliberated and perceived by faith and naked love in the summit of his spirit. By this naked consent, by this mute abandon, by this pure love, the incomprehensible is loved in the soul above every thought and every perceivable act. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 5)

The same Author deals with this in more than thirty Chapters, namely in second book.

SECTION 41  
IDLENESS. THIS PRAYER IS NOT IDLE.

SHORT METHOD

Those who accuse this prayer of idleness are greatly deceived; and it is from lack of experience that they say it in that way. O if they wanted to work a little to try it out! In a short time they would be experienced and learned in this matter. (Chapter 12, Number 3)

It is not therefore a question of remaining idle, but of acting with dependence on the Spirit of God, who must animate us. (Chapter 21, Number 4)

Then the soul is as if in a habit of the act, resting in this same act.

But its repose is not idle: for then there is always a subsisting act, which is a gentle sinking into God. (Chapter 22, Number 5)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. Here in climbing by the lowest to the first and principle, we remove all these things; [It is not therefore idleness, since one is not stripped of a natural operation, except to have the supernatural operation.] so that we may know this ignorance itself unprotected, covered and enveloped above all things, which are and which can be known, in whatever that may be, and so that we can see this suessential obscurity, which is hidden below all the light which is in the being of things. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 2)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

2. When the soul leaves meditation, this loving regard, or general instruction is necessary for it; because if the soul did not then have this instruction or assistance in God, it would follow that the soul would do and have nothing, in that it lacked meditation – and neither having contemplation, which is the general aforementioned knowledge, in which the soul has its spiritual powers actually applied, namely memory, understanding and will already united in this instruction, it would infallible lack every exercise toward God. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 14)

3. This prayer seems very short to the soul, because it has been in pure intelligence. And it is the short prayer that is said to penetrate the heavens: short, because one does not consider the time: and it penetrates the heavens, because the soul is united in heavenly intelligence. – Even though it seems to the soul in this instruction, that it does nothing and that it is occupied in nothing, in that it does not operate with the senses; that it does not nevertheless believe it is losing time and is useless. For although the harmony of the powers of the soul ceases, its intelligence still remains in the manner that we have said. That is why the Wife who was wise answered herself about this doubt: Although I may sleep in that I naturally stop operating; [Canticle 5:2] my heart is awake supernaturally, raised in supernatural account. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 14)

4. In these beginnings when we see through the aforementioned things, that the soul will not be employed in this repose or account, one will have to make use of speech, until one has acquire the habit that we said to be in some manner perfect; which will be that when they want to meditate, they will remain in this knowledge of peace without being able to meditate, or even desiring to. – In such a way that often the soul will find itself in this loving and peaceable presence, without performing anything with the powers, as has been said; and it will often need to be gently and moderately helped by speech in order to put itself there: which being acquired, the soul no longer discourses and works with the powers: For then one can truly say, that intelligence and flavor are produced in it, not that it may do some thing, this soul having nothing to do, except to be attentive to God with love. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 15)

5. You will tell me that the will, if the understanding does not understand distinctly, will at least be idle, and will not love, in that one can love only what one understands. I avow and agree with that, principally in the operations and natural acts of the soul, that the will loves only what the understanding knows distinctly. But during the time that the contemplation which we are speaking about lasts, which contemplation God communicates to the soul, it is not necessary for there to be any distinct account, or for the soul to perform several discourses; because then God communicates to it a loving account, which is conjointly like an ardent light without, and then according to the manner in which the intelligence and love is also in the will: For as the knowledge is general and obscure, the understanding not being able to distinctly know what it understands, the will also in general loves without any distinction: For considering that God in this delicate communication is love and light, he equally informs these two powers, even though

he sometimes stamps more in one than in the other; and thus sometimes one feels more intelligence than love, at other times more love than intelligence. That is why there is no reason to fear or be frightened by the idleness of the will in this state: For if it stops performing acts directed by particular instructions, as long as they proceed from his side, God intoxicates it with love infused by the means of the instruction of contemplation, such as we just said; And the acts which are done according to this infused contemplation, are all the more excellent, deserving and savory, because the motor which pours out this Love is better. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 10)

6. One must not fear, even though the memory must be empty of its forms and figures; for since God has neither form nor figure, it goes about securely being empty of forms and figures, and approaches more near to God: For the more it leans on the imagination, the more it will be distanced from God, and will be all the more in peril; seeing that God being above our thoughts, he does not fall into the imagination. (*Living Flame of Love* Section 2)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

7. Rusbroche: (Speaking about the false idleness of the Enlightened Ones:) Before passing beyond, it is good to hear make mention of certain people, which even though they seem good on the outside, if they leave a life contrary to all virtues. – For all those who lived without supernatural charity, [It is easy to see, how much the Writings that God made me do, are different from that; since one tries to banish all self pursuit and reflection through the neglect of oneself; and from looking for repose in exterior things, one is distanced even from the exterior things in order to find repose only in God.] being bent and reflected onto themselves, seeking the repose in exterior things; in that all creatures naturally desire repose. – But may one be careful; I beg of you, how one gives oneself up to this natural repose. Those who attach themselves to it leave on one side, remaining idle without any exterior or interior exercise, in order to enjoy the wished for repose, and to not be troubled or hindered elsewhere. But to give oneself up to this repose in this way is neither good nor licit: for that brings about in man a certain blinding and ignorance of all things, and makes man rest in himself completely indolent and nonchalant; and this repose is none other than a cowardly idleness, to which those about whom we are speaking give themselves up so much, that for every action they plunge themselves into a neglect of God, of themselves and of all things. This repose is therefore contrary [Difference between the fake and true idleness.] to this supernatural quietude that one possesses in God, since this one is a loving liquefaction of the spirit, joined to a simple glance toward the incomprehensible clarity. – Those ones then are very much deceived those who loving themselves and looking for themselves, indolently sits down in this natural repose, and not looking for God by their desire, they never find him by an enjoying love. (*Seven Guards* Chapter 76) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 1, Chapter 8, Section 2)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account of

8. The Abbot Gilbert: In leisure, affection is deployed, and one does not do little there. It happens when we are in this leisure, that we feel the trait of the more penetrating divine love. The care envelopes the spirit, the repose develops it. (Sermon 1 on the Canticle) (*Notes on John of the Cross* Disciple 1, Sentence 2)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFIELD

9. This is the good idleness, where the proof of fidelity is, and where the soul is constituted in true purity and patience of spirit, as also in perfect resignation; it is here where the last draining of everything which is human in man, it is here where the total death and full victory is found, and where one gives the spirit back to God; and consequently where man is made divine: in that by such a perseverance and death God lives and reigns in the soul, performing all his works there. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 14)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

10. It is only the true dying man, or the true dead man, who can sustain true repose, (which is the effect of the divine glance) in true and holy idleness; with which alone eternally fits dying in ones object. The soul which is in this state of holy idleness alone can, and not differently than by its fidelity in dying, supporting the very painful and almost unbearable effort of this repose outside of self, where it goes about following at such expense the glance which secretly attracts it to self. So well that as the soul is consumed by mystic deaths, which seems to have to suppress all the life of nature; the pure spirit, or to say it better, all the foundation to which the soul is reduced, receive new constitutions and new strength and vigor. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 2)

#### MONSIEUR OLIER

11. He admirably proves in Letter 123, that the calm and the silence, in which God sometimes keeps the souls, is not idleness, but a great great. I am not giving an account of it so as to not be too long.

SECTION 42  
OPERATIONS. THE OPERATIONS OF GOD TAKES PLACE IN THE SOUL IN AN UNKNOWN WAY.

That has been seen in so many passages, that it is necessary to say little about it.

SHORT METHOD

God purifies the soul so much of all self, distinct, perceived and multiplied operations, which make a very great dissimilarity, that finally he makes it little by little conformable and then uniform with him, raising the passive capacity of the creature, widening it and immobilizing it, though in a hidden and unknown manner; that is why one calls it mystic. (Chapter 24, Number 8)

CANTICLE

My obvious blackness hides the greatness of the operations of God in my soul. (Chapter 1, Verse 4)

The sacred Husband is always in the center of the soul which is faithful to him: but he remains there so hidden, that the one which possesses this happiness, almost always overlooks him; except at certain moments when it pleases him to make himself felt by the loving soul, which for then uncovers him in an intimate and profound way. He makes use of it in that way with the most pure of his Mistresses, such as the testimony she is going to give. When my King, he who rules me and guided me sovereignly, rested in his bed, which is the depths and the center of my soul, where he takes his repose; my nard, which is my faithfulness, spread its scent in such a gentle and agreeable way, that it obliged him to make himself known to me: Then I recognized that he was resting in me, as if in his Royal bed; which I had overlooked beforehand; for even though he was there, I did not take notice of him. (Chapter 1, Verse 11)

This Mistress does not know that her glimpse has become so purified, that being always direct and without reflection, he does not know her glimpse, and is not aware, that she does not stop seeing. Moreover as soon as one can no longer see him and one forgets oneself, as well as all the creatures, it is necessary to watch God. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

As the peel is the least part of the pomegranate, which encloses all its goodness in itself: so it is with that which appears outwardly on the soul of this degree very little in comparison with that which is hidden. (Chapter 6, Verse 6)

AUTHORITIES

HENRY SUSO

1. While man knows or feels his union with God, or something approaching this about which he can speak, he can enter still further. (*Dialogue on Truth* Chapter 8)
2. See Annihilation Number 3.
3. See Acts Number 1.
4. The created spirit is seized by the sure-essential spirit of God, and carried away to a place it could never reach by itself. In this carrying away it loses every image, form and multiplicity, and is led into ignorance of self and everything; so that it no longer sees itself or the other things outside of God, and he is absorbed by a simple loss with the three sacred People into the abyss of the Divinity: there he finds his beatitude according to the supreme truth. (*Dialogue on Truth* Chapter 21)

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

5. See Annihilation Number 15.
6. If these creatures, which are rare in the world, were known, they would be adored: but God keeps them unknown and hidden to themselves and to others until the hour of death, which is the time when the true and the false are known. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 11)

ST. TERESA

7. The soul does not understand how, or through where this good that it would like to not lose enters. –  
Now here great truths are communicated to it; because this light is such that it dazzles it, in such a way that it prevents it from knowing what it is. –

For as a child does not know how he grows or how he sucks, seeing that even without him looking for the breast, and without him doing any thing, the nipple is often put in his mouth: in the same way does it happen to the soul here; for it does not in the least know if it is doing any thing, and does not know how, or through where, and cannot understand from where this great good came of it. (*Conceptions of the Love of God* Chapter 4)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

8. One must know that this general knowledge about which we are speaking, is at times so subtle and so delicate, principally when it is more pure, more simple, more perfect, more spiritual and interior, than the soul even though it is employed in it, does not perceive it and does not feel it. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 14)

9. This soul will not in the least intervene in the affairs of the others; for it does not even remember its own: and the Spirit of God has this property in the soul where he dwells, that immediately he inclines it toward not wanting to know the affairs of the others, he makes it forget them all, especially those which are not for its profit, because the Spirit of God is recollected, and does not go forth into the affairs of others; and thus the soul remains in ignorance of everything. That is not to say that it loses the habit of skills, and totally the accounts of things that it knew before, even though it remains in this not knowing; but it is that it loses the act and the memory of all things in these absorbing of love. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

10. D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: They become like a child, which hugs his mother and sucks the breast, which most often sees and hears nothing, or at least does not judge what he sees and hears. (*Spiritual Summary* Chapter 13, Section 13) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 2)

11. St. Thomas on St. Dennis: There is a very perfect knowledge of God through distancing, namely, in that we know God by ignorance through a certain union above the nature of the spirit; namely when our spirit withdraws itself from all the other things, and after also leaving itself, it is united to the super shining rays of Divinity, namely in that it knows that God is not only above all things which are below it, but also above it and over all things which can be understood by it. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 2)

12. Suarez: Consequently this ignorance of God, about which St. Dennis speaks, is not an ignorance of deprivation, or of bad disposition: for to thus ignore, God is a very great imperfection: therefore by ignorance he means a certain knowledge of God, through which one knows what God is not rather than what he is; and for that it is called ignorance. (Volume 2 of Religion L2 of Orat. Cap. 12, Number 20) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 2)

13. St. Bernard: See Understanding Number 31.

14. St. Bonaventure: See Understanding Number 32.

15. Hugues of St. Victor: They do not know where they see themselves as being, and find inside something like through the embraces of love, and they ignore what it is, and nevertheless they long to keep it with all their strength. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 2)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

16. The best for man is, to ignore in this life in what degree of grace and charity he is, and even to ignore if he is at all agreeable to God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9, Section 17)

17. The holiness of the Saints is unknown to men; their life is known to God alone and to the heavenly citizens. Yet it is not entirely unknown to the Devils, and they fear grappling with them. Their life is without miracles; there being no greater miracle than their continual holiness, by the force and virtue of which they remain fixed and stopped immobile in God, over all virtue. In such a way that he, who would like to presume to touch them, would be greatly deceived: one would sooner touch God to speak thus, in the abyss in which they are entirely absorbed and engulfed. They are not however imperceptible, because of their naked love of God, in whom and for whom they virilely fight and resist the assaults that the Devil and men continually deliver to them. Several who appear just in public, even judge them very badly, because of not knowing what is their life, and of what it consists, what is their supreme renunciation and where it resides. God allowing it to be like this for the greatest good of his friends. Therefore in one day they bring more profit to the Church by their perfect and continual union to God, than the others do in several years. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 2, Chapter 4, Number 5)

18. See Unknown Saints Number 7.

19. As for your true Lovers, who have entirely and without means lost themselves to themselves, nothing can be said about them: they are not seen, they are not known, their dwelling is overlooked; their pleasures, their delights, where they rest in the midday is not known. So that being unknown, they are very often, and even usually, persecuted by men, even the best and most holy; in which they take great pleasure in subjecting themselves to, in order to in that make themselves like their beloved Savior. For since for their love you have been persecuted by your own children, as if you had been the enemy of the entire human race, is it not a great honor for the disciple to be treated like his Master? (Contemplation 16)

20. Even the holy men often enough seek these people and cannot find them, seeing the difference of the state and constitution between each other. This makes it so that very often they persecute them and slander then outrageously, as idle, unknown people whose life has no value according to their judgment. These fingers of these unknown Friends of God often exude the very tested myrrh. For they are not insensitive like stone and bronze, nor in their nature impassive like the Angels. – I add nevertheless that, as they are humility itself, affliction such as it may be, never makes them depart, in that it cannot meet them, having only God living in them who [This is to bring Jesus Christ into his states (*Short Method* Chapter 8, Number 1): I have written about it in many places. (See the Explanations of Numbers 20:7-9, I Corinthians 4:10, Galatians 6:17, Philippians 3:19-21)] suffers and endures all things in them, for which they serve him as an eternal instrument. (Contemplation 38)

21. As these people are so rare among men, it is not wonderful if one does not make a big case of it, seeing that it is impossible to exalt, and even to love a lot what one does not know. If these excellent souls are mistreated by the best moral men, what must they suffer from liberties? Without doubt it is necessary to resolve oneself to being sharply persecuted by them. (*On the Effusion of Man Outside of God* Treatise 3, Number 14)

22. He who having passed to the whole of God, seems to have nothing of such Holiness, is all the more wonderful, because his condition is infinitely raised beyond the elementary region. His clearness shines marvelously for the edification of his neighbors, in all his actions, words, gestures and feelings; all that revealing clearly enough the Spirit of God, to whomever is disposed by virtue to envisage this state; which Spirit of God fills these souls gently, dominates them strongly, heats them up briskly and illuminates them excellently. Yet I certainly know about what I must complain, even though I may not know about whom; -- hardly have I ever known or will I know someone in the future, who remains firm and generous in the troubles of nature even in the time of extremity: -- at the least and first encounter of similar troubles, the vanquished soul comes down from this cross, going to be consoled by the senses. This truth condemns with weakness certain spirituals, who cannot agonize in naked love in the troubles of nature they are of some duration. (*On the Effusion of Man Outside of God* Treatise 3, Numbers 70-71)

23. The true and lost holiness is pure spirit. It consists in pure and eminent love, highly and eternally renounced; and the spirituals who are below this state of eminence know nothing of it, because of the extreme distance that there is from one to the other. These unknown Saints, as they are, have only to go on their path through their solitary and difficult desert in spirit, dying very nakedly to all the gifts of God, and always making their path beyond all that. – It matters not in the least if men know them or not: on the contrary, this kind of holiness being unknown is from that even more assured. (*On the Effusion of Man Outside of God* Treatise 3, Number 73)

24. Their humility is here in its own dwelling, according to all its extent on the outside, as much as it is necessary; and on the inside it is also in its center and in its own fortress, without anybody, by way of saying, that God and them do not know it: on the contrary, it can happen that some consider them haughty, without reason, taking their good liberty of spirit as the same haughtiness; the blinding of whom prevents them from judging better. (*The Death of Saints* Chapter 3, Number 7)



## SECTION 43 PROPER OPERATIONS

This has so much relation to Acts that it is almost the same thing.

### SHORT METHOD

One must be contented with saying that it is then that it is of great consequence to make action and operation of self-*cease* in order to let God act. – But the creature is so in love with what it does, that he believes he is doing nothing if he does not feel, known and distinguish his operation. He does not see that it is the speed of his course which prevents him from seeing his steps; and that the operation of God becoming more abundant, it absorbs the creature's, as one sees that the sun, as it rises, little by little absorbs the light of the stars, which were very distinguishable before it appeared. It is not the fault of the light, which makes it so that the stars are no longer distinguishable, but it is the excess of light.

It is the same here. The creature no longer distinguishes his operation, because a strong and general light absorbs all his distinct little lights, and makes them lose strength entirely because its excess surpasses them all. –

I say then that this lapse in operating does not come from scarcity, but from abundance, as the person who has experience with it will certainly distinguish it. He will know that it is not an unfruitful silence, caused by scarcity, but a full and unctuous silence caused by abundance.

Two kinds of people silence themselves; one from having nothing to say, and the other from having too much. It is the same way in this degree; one is quieted by excess, and not by lack.

The water causes death for two people very differently. One dies of thirst; and the other drowns: one dies by scarcity and the other by abundance. Here it is abundance, which makes the operations cease. It is therefore of consequence to remain the most in silence that one can.

A small [It seems to me that the Blessed John of the Cross makes use of this comparison: I think I have written it before (See Prayer Section 2, Number 17 and St. Francis of Sales, Prayer Section 2, Number 23, as does St. Teresa below Number 13, Operations of God Number 7)] child attached to the breast of his wet nurse shows it to us appreciably. He begins to move his small lips to make the milk come; but when the milk comes in abundance, he contents himself with swallowing it without making any movement: if he did, he would be doing harm to himself, and would make the milk pour out, and he would be obliged to quit.

In the same way in the beginning of prayer one must first move the lips of affection: but when the milk of grace flows, there is nothing to do but remain in repose, swallowing gently; and when this milk stops coming, move the affection a little, like the child does with his lips. Whoever does other wise could not profit from this grace, which is given here to attract one to the repose of love, and not to excite one to the movement of one's own multiplicity.

What happens to this child who swallows the milk gently in peace without moving? Who would believe that he is fed in this way? Yet the more he sucks in peace, the more the milk benefits him. What happens, I say, to this child? He falls asleep in the bosom of his mother: this soul peaceful to prayer often falls asleep in mystic slumber, where all the powers quiet themselves, until they enter by state into that which is given to them fleetingly. You see that the soul is lead here completely naturally, without discomfort, without effort, without study, and without artifice. (Chapter 12, Numbers 2-5)

May they not take great pains to do something else when God acts more excellently in them and with them. It is to hate sin like God hates it, to hate it in this way. It is the most pure love that God operates in this soul. May it not therefore show eagerness to act, but remain such as it is, following the counsel of the Wiseman: [Ecclesiasticus 11:22 – *“The blessing of the Lord is in the reward of the Godly, and suddenly he maketh his blessing to flourish.”*] Put your confidence in God; remain in repose in the place where he put you. (Chapter 15, Number 3)

This [Precaution to be noted.] cannot be for the previous degrees, where the soul being still in action, can and must make use of its industry for all things, more or less, according to its advancement.

For the souls of this degree may they keep to what they are told, and not change their simple occupations.

It is the same for the Communion: May they let God act, and remain in silence: God cannot be received better but by a God. (Chapter 15, Number 5)

This prayer is the prayer of truth: it is to [John 4:23] adore the Father in Spirit and in truth. In spirit; because we are pulled from our human and carnal way of acting, in order to enter into the purity of the spirit which prays in us. And in truth; because the soul is put in the truth of the All of God, and of the nothingness of the creature.

There are only two [The truth of this proposition in Annihilation and Humility.] truths, the all, and the nothing. All the rest is lies.

We can honor the All of God, only by our annihilation. (Chapter 20, Number 4)

Our action must therefore be to put us in a state of enduring the action of God, and to give room for the Word to mark out his image in us. An image, which moves, would prevent the painter from drawing a painting on it. All the movements that we do by our own spirit prevent this admirable painter from working, and makes false deeds be done.

We must therefore remain in peace, and move only when he moves us. (Chapter 21, Number 5)

In order to therefore be in Jesus Christ, we must let ourselves be filled by his spirit, and empty ourselves of ourselves: it must be evacuated. (Chapter 21, Number 9)

All things must [Ecclesiastes 3:1 – “**To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:**”] be done in their time: each state has its beginning, its progress, and its end. If one always wants to stop at the beginning, that is to make too great of a mistake. There is no art, which does not have its progress. [Way of quitting one’s own operations.] In the beginning one must work with effort, but next one must enjoy the fruit of one’s work.

When the vessel is in port, the marines have trouble in pulling it out of there in order to put it on the open sea: but then they, turn it easily to the side to which they want to go. In the same way, when the soul is still in sin, and in the creatures, one must with much effort pull it from there, the ropes which keep it bound must be undone; then working through strong and vigorous acts, one must try to lure it to the inside, taking it little by little from its own port: and by removing it from there, it is turned to the inside, which is the place, which one desires to travel too.

When the vessel is turned in this way, as it advances into the sea, it is taken further away from land, and the further it is removed from land; the less effort is necessary to attract it. Finally one begins to sail very gently, and the vessel is moved away so strongly, that one must leave off the scull, which is rendered useless. What does the Pilot (Captain) then do? He contents himself with furling the sails and manning the helm.

To Furl the sails is to perform the prayer of simple exposition before God, in order to be moved by his spirit. To man the helm is to prevent our heart from going off from the right path, bring it back again gently and guiding it according to the movement of the spirit of God, which little by little takes hold of this heart, like the winds little by little fills the sails and pushes the vessels. While the vessel has the wind aft, the pilot and the sailors take a rest from their work. What steps do they not take without getting tired! They make more head way in this way, and by letting the vessel be driven by the vent, than they would make in much more time with all their first efforts: and they then wanted to tow, besides becoming very tired, their work would be useless, and they would hold up the vessel.

This is the conduct that we must keep to in our interior, and by acting in this way, we will advance more in a short time by divine motion, than in all ways by many of our efforts. –

When the wind is opposing, if the wind and the storm are strong, the anchor must be thrown in the sea in order to stop the vessel. This anchor is nothing but confidence in God, and hope in his goodness, waiting for the calm and the lull in patience, and for a favorable mind to return, as David did: [Psalms 39:1 (or 40:1 KJV)] I waited, he says, for the Lord with great patience, and he finally lowered himself down to me. (Chapter 22, Number 79)

That which is from man and his own industry, however noble and exalted it may be, must, I say, die. –

All which is from our own efforts and property must be destroyed: because nothing [This will be seen when I write about Property.] is opposed to God but property and all the spitefulness of man is in this property, as if in the source of spite. (Chapter 24, Number 1)

God purified this soul of all self, distinct, perceived, and multiplied operations, which make up a very great dissimilarity, so much that finally makes it little by little conform, and then uniform with himself; raising the passive capacity of the creature, widening and immobilizing it, though in a hidden and unknown manner; that is why it is called mystic. But the soul must passively work toward all these operations.

It is true that before coming there, it must act [This has been seen in Acts.] more in the beginning; then as the operation of God becomes stronger, little by little the soul must yield to him, until he absorbs it completely. But that lasts a long time.

One does not then say, as some believed, that one must not pass by action; since on the contrary it is the door: but only, that one need not always remain there; seeing that man must tend toward the perfection of his end, and that he will never be able to arrive there except by quitting the first means, which having been necessary for him to introduce him into this path, would harm him greatly in the following part, if he attached himself to them stubbornly; since they would prevent him from arriving at his end. This is what St. Paul did: [Philippians 3:13-14] I leave, he says, what is behind, and I try to advance, in order to achieve what lies ahead.

Would one not say that a person had lost his senses, if having undertaken a trip, he stopped at the first inn, because he would be assured that several people have already passed by there, that some have sojourned there, and that the masters of the house remain there? (Chapter 24, Numbers 8-9)

#### ST. DENNIS

1. But again here, let us keep ourselves in the terms of this law of the Holy Scriptures, which forbids us from tying down and binding the truth of the things which are said by God, to the [I Corinthians 2:4] persuasive words of human wisdom; but wants it to be demonstrated by the strength of the sapience of the Theologians, moved and inspired by the Holy Spirit, through which we are conjoined to ineffable and unknown things, in a way which cannot be expressed or known, by the means of a certain union better and more excellent than every reasonable and intellectual power and action which may be in us. (*Divine Names* Chapter 1)

2. By the same proportion of truth, infinity who has no boundaries, and which is beyond all being, surpasses all the essences of the world: and the one, which is above thought, cannot be imagined by any thought: and the Good, which is above the word, cannot be declared by any word. Unity which makes all unity one, sur-essential being, non intelligible intellect, Word which cannot be expressed, that itself which cannot be either declared, or understood, or named, which is not in the manner of everything which is, and which nevertheless is the author of the being to everything which is, itself not being, because it is beyond all being. (*Divine Names* Chapter 1)

3. Men gifted with a divine spirit, being conjoined to these unions, like the Angels, in that this reunion with the more than divine light comes about through a cessation of all operation of understanding, praise this more than divine light very properly by way of negation, through which one removes from in front of it all which is in whatever way it may be: and those who praise it in this way through that union itself, that they have with this sovereign splendor, are truly and supernaturally enlightened, that in truth this light is the cause of all being, but that it is nothing of everything which is, as if being sur-essentially separated from everything which is. It is not then licit for any of these lovers of this truth which is above all truth, to praise the divine sur-essentiality, even though it may be this sur-existence of the goodness which is over all goodness, to praise it, I say, like reason, or like power, or like understanding or life or essence; but as if excellently abstracted and separated from all habit, movement, life, imagination, opinion, name, word, thought and intelligence. (*Divine Names* Chapter 1)

4. The Good is called [St. Dennis shows how this light over comes everything: it must then over come our light, according to the comparison I gave. *Short Method* Chapter 12, Number 2] intelligible and spiritual light: because every spirit which is above the heavens, is abundantly filled with spiritual light, and because it chases away all ignorance and error from the souls into which it insinuates itself, and gives to all of them a sacred light: and because it purified [The same operation of God which enlightens and attracts to self, purifies. See in the Opuscles, *Treatise on Purgatory* Part 1, Number 12, and *Short Method* Chapter 11, Number 2] and cleans the eyes of the understanding of the fog cause by the ignorance which spread and collected around, it wakes them and open their eyes that they had open beforehand with a great weighing down by darkness, and firstly pours into them [Progress of grace in the souls.] a mediocre glimmer; then when they have tasted the light and come to desire it more, ever more is infused into them; and when they have loved it a lot, it illuminates them abundantly, and always lures them further ahead, in proportion to the strength and the vigor of their deed and their elevation. The Good therefore which is over all light is called spiritual light, as if a [fontal] and originating ray, an effusion of light which flows over on all sides, and which with its fullness illuminates every spirit, either over the world, or around the world, or also in the world; which renews all the powers and intellectual faculties, which embraces and contains everyone in order to be extended above everyone, because it is seated and established over everyone: is short which understands in self, which surmounts [God surmounts our operation with his.] and which has in advance all the strength and virtue of that which has power to illuminate, as if the first principle of the light and of everything which is luminous: which awakens and brings back together into one all intellectual and reasoning thing, and makes them be united, clasped and pressed. For just as the property of ignorance is, to divide and separate the spirits which are in error; so is the property of intelligible light, to collect and reunite by its presence the things that it illuminates, to perfect them and to convert them to the true being, by turning them away from several views, and to regather their scattered and lost views into several objects; or to say it better, their distracted and vagabond imaginations and fantasies to one single, true, pure and uniform knowledge, filling them with its light, which is one, and which has the power to make one, those to whom it communicates itself. (*Divine Names* Chapter 4)

HENRY SUSO

5. See Consistency Number 6.

RUSBROCHE

6. When the way of the creature ceases, loses strength, and cannot go farther, it is then that the way of God begins, that is to say, when man attached himself to God by his efforts, his love and his desires, without being able to reach the divine union, then the spirit of the Lord, like a blazing fire, comes to his aid, and burns, absorbs into self and consumes everything; in such a way that the soul forgets itself and all its exercise, and finds it has become one same spirit and one same love with God.

There all the senses and all the powers are quieted and lulled in o divine peace, being flooded by riches from the Divinity more abundantly than they can desire. This first operation is attributed [*Explanation of the Canticle* Chapter 1, Verse 1] to the Holy Spirit.

The second is attributed to the Son, through which the understanding raised above all reason, all consideration and all discernment, is penetrated by the divine light in a naked intelligence; and through this light he can intently contemplate the divine clarity and the eternal Truth.

The third operation, or way, is attributed [*Explanation of the Canticle* Chapter 1, Verse 1] to the Father; it is God which emptying the memory of shapes and images, raises the soul thus laid bare down to its origin, which is God the Father, unites it to his principle and establishes it there. (*Seven Guards* Chapter 19)

#### HARPHIUS

7. See Annihilation Number 8.

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

8. See Annihilation Number 12.

9. Now how is this sharing of God that cannot be told: and no man will know it, if the spirit does not return into this purity and cleanliness in which it was created by God? But in order to reach this goal God must [See what is said in the *Short Method* about the purification of the gold. (Chapter 24, Numbers 1-3)] consumes us inwardly and outwardly, and the being of man must be so annihilated, that he can no more move than if he were a dead body without feeling. It is necessary for the interior to die in itself, and for his life and all his being to be hidden in God with Jesus Christ and for him to know nothing about it, or to be able to know, or even to think about it any more than if he had no life or being. The man in the exterior must also remain blind, deaf, mute, without taste and without operation of understanding, of memory and of will, so lost that he cannot understand where he is; may he remain deprived of himself, and appear crazy to the others, which are amazed to see a creature which has being without operation. (Chapter 35)

10. God destroys [When God wants a soul for himself, he destroys and reverses (with respect to it) all things.] all the things that we love, through death, sickness, poverty, hate, discord, detractions, scandals, mockeries and vile deeds (infamies), with relatives, friends, with ourselves; so that we do not know what to do, seeing ourselves drawn outside of the things which delighted us: quite the opposite from all the things we receive pain and shame, and we do not know why divine love performs such operations, which seem to us completely contrary to reason, from the side of God, and from the side of the world: that is why the soul cries out and is tormented; it tries and hopes to depart from this great agony, and never does it leave.

When this divine Love has kept this soul suspended and almost without hope for some time, and troubled by all the things that it loved before, then [End of the destructive operations of God.] he shows himself to it with his divine face gay and shining; and as soon as the soul sees him, and remains naked and forsaken by all other help, it flings itself into his hands.

When the soul saw the divine operation by means of the pure divine Love, it said to itself thus: O blind one, what were you occupied in? What were you seeking? What did you desire? Everything you are looking for, and all the delight that you can long for, is here. O Divine Love, with what gentle deceit did you deceive me, in order to undress me of all self love, and reclothe me in pure love, full of joy. (Chapter 41)

11. All the other operations which are done by this man are still done with this love, and are made agreeable by the gratifying grace; because God is he who operates with his pure love, without man intervening in it: and God having taken up the care of this man, and having draw all of it to him, operates by means of this love, enriching it with his goods with such a great liberality, that finally he finds himself attached to the thread of love, and sunk into the divine abyss without him knowing it. And even though man in this state seems to be a dead, lost and object thing, he nevertheless finds his life hidden in God, where all the treasures and riches of eternal life are: and what he prepared for the soul his beloved can neither be said nor thought of. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 1)

12. The works, which are done by Love, are yet more perfect, because they are done without man having any part in them. Love made itself the master and the victor over man; and man is so absorbed and sunk in the sea of this love, that he does not know where he is, and remains lost in himself, not being able to do anything: Love is that which operates in man: and these operations are works of perfection, because they are done without property of man: these are works of gratifying grace, that God has as agreeable. This gentle and pure Love took and pulled man to self, and deprived him of himself; it took possession of him and continually operates in this man and through this man, only for his good and usefulness, without him intervening in it. (*Dialogue* Book 3, Chapter 5)

#### ST. TERESA

13. In this prayer the will could not enjoy itself, in wanting to by force pull the understanding after it, without turning itself around and disturbing it: from which it would happen that not only would it not by these means pull a greater

profit from its prayer; but also that all its efforts would serve only to make it lose what God would have given it without it having contributing anything to that. Here is a comparison that our Lord one day put in my spirit, during this Prayer, which in my opinion explains that very clearly: that is why I beg you to consider it well.

The soul in this state [See *Short Method*] resembles a child which still suckles, to whom his mother in order to caress him when he is in her arms, secretes the milk into his mouth without him even moving his lips. For it happens in the same way in this prayer, that the will loves without the understanding contributing anything to it by its work, because Our Lord wants that, without having thought of it, it knows that it is with him; that it contents itself with sucking the milk with which he fills his mouth; that it tastes this gentleness, without paining itself to know that it is he to whom it is obliged for that; it rejoices in enjoying it, without wanting to know, either in what way it enjoys it, or what is this thing that it is enjoying: and it thus enters into a happy forgetting of self, through the confidence that he who is nearby it will not forget to provide for its needs: Whereas if it stopped to dispute with the understanding to make it despite itself a participant in its happiness, by pulling it after itself, it would inevitably happen that not being able at the same to have a strong attention to two things, it would let this milk pour out, and would thus find itself deprived of this divine nourishment.

Now there is this difference between the prayer of quietude and this one, where the soul is entirely united to God, that in this last one the soul does not receive this divine nourishment like a meat which enters the mouth; but the soul all of a sudden finds it in itself, without knowing how Our Lord put it there: whereas in the first one it seems, that Our Lord wants that the soul to work a little, even though it does it with so much gentleness that it hardly takes notice of its work. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 31)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

14. The first night or purgation is bitter and terrible for the senses: the second has no comparison, in that it is very dreadful for the spirit, as we will tell forthwith --. This spiritual night is not in the least dealt with either by words, or writings, about which night the discourses drawn from experience are very rare. Therefore as the conduct which these beginners have in the path of God, is very low and extremely corresponding to their love and their taste, as we already said, God wants to advance and pull them from this baseness to a higher degree of his love, and deliver them from the base exercise of sense and discourse, which seeks God so unworthily, and with so many disadvantages, as has been said, and to put them in the exercise of the spirit, or they can more abundantly and with more liberty and emancipation from the imperfections to communicate with God. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 8)

15. This dry contemplation gives to the soul an inclination and desire to be alone and in repose, without being able to think of any particular thing, and without even having any desire to do so. Then if those to who that happens knew how to calm themselves, neglecting every interior and exterior work, that they claim to do through their industry and discourse, not caring about anything else, except to let themselves be led to God, to receive and hear with an interior and loving attention, [Note: unrestrained] unrestrained in this leisure and forgetting of all things, they would enjoy this delicate interior meal. Which is such that if the soul desire to, or that it does a particular diligence to feel it, it does not feel it; because, as I say, it operates in it in the greatest leisure and forgetting of the soul: it is like the air, which escapes when one wants to close one's hand in order to hold it back. We can understand on this subject what the Husband says to his Wife in the Canticle: [Canticle 6:4] turn your eyes away from me, for they make me take flight: in that in this state, God puts the soul in such a way, and guides it through such a different path, that if it wanted to operated by itself and by its ability, it would prevent the work that God performs in it, rather than help; which beforehand was quite the opposite. The cause of that is, because already in this state of contemplation, which is when it goes forth from the discourse to the state of the advanced ones, God is he who operates in the soul; so that it seems that he ties the interior powers to it, leaving it no support in the understanding, or path in the will, or discourse in the memory; in that what the soul can then operate of itself, serves, as we said, only as a hindrance to interior peace, and to the work that God performs in the spirit in this drought of sense, which being spiritual and delicate performs a quiet, delicate, pacific work far removed from all these other first tastes which were extremely palpable and very sensory. For this peace is the one that God (as David says [Psalms 84:9 (or 85:8 KJV)] speaks in the soul to make it spiritual. (*Dark Night* Book 1, Chapter 9)

16. See Prayer, Section 2, Number 18.

17. So it was fitting, that the operations of these appetites with their movements had gone to sleep in this night, so that they did not impede the soul from the supernatural goods of the union of Love of God; in that [See what is said in the *Short Method* (Chapter 24, Section 1) that one cannot arrive at the union, either through meditation, or through active contemplation.] during their vivacity and operation, it cannot be obtained: for all their work and movement sooner prevent it from helping to receive the spiritual goods of the union of love; because all natural ability is short in what concerns the supernatural goods that God by his sole infusion places in the soul passively, secretly and in silence.

And so it is necessary for all powers to be silenced in order to receive the said infusion, without interposing their base works and vile inclination there. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 14)

18. It follows from that the more the soul goes about into obscurity and empty of its natural operation, all the more is it assured: because, as the Prophet says [Hosea 13:9], the perdition of the soul comes only from itself, which is to say, from its operations and interior and sensory, discordant and non adjusted appetites; and the good that you have, says God, comes only from me. Consequently it being in this way diverted from its evils, it remains that forthwith the goods of the union with God in its appetites and powers come to it, which union will make them divine and heavenly. From where it comes that if the soul is on guard in the time of this darkness, it will know very well, that the appetite and the powers are not in the least diverted to vain and useless things, and that it is outside the vain glory of pride and presumption, outside of vain and false joy, and several other things. From which it certainly follows, that in order to go into darkness, so much is necessary for the soul to be in danger of losing itself, that it sooner wins itself, since in this state it acquires the virtues. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 16)

19. The Wife no longer keeps any other style or way of dealing with God except the exercise of love, because it has changed all its first way of proceeding in love. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 20)

20. The interior goods that this tranquil contemplation leaves imprinted in the soul without the soul feeling it, are priceless, because finally they are the very hidden and very delicate unctions of the Holy Spirit, where it secretly fills the soul with riches, gifts and graces; because being God, it performs like God and operates like God. Now these goods, these great riches, these sublime and delicate unctions and these accounts of the Holy Spirit, which are so subtle and so pure, that neither the soul, nor he who governs it, does not understand them, but only he who places and communicates them, to make the soul more agreeable, are very easily turned away and impeded, namely by the slightest action that the soul will want to perform to apply the sense or the appetite, to want to attach itself to some essence or account; which is a signal damage, worthy of a great sorrow and compassion. (*Living Flame of Love Canticle* 3, Verse 3, Sections 7-8)

21. Therefore, o souls, when God does great favors for you, to guide you through the state of solitude and recollection, getting you out of the way of your arduous sense, do not return there: quit your operations; For if they helped you before to renounce the world and yourselves, when you were in the state of beginners; now that God does you the favor of he himself being the worker or he who operates, they will be a great obstacle and obstruction to you. For taking care to not interpose your operations in anything, detaching them from everything, and not hampering them, (which is what you must do for your part in this state, and must conjointly keep the simple and loving glance, without forcing the soul, except to sequester it from everything, and raise it, for fear of distressing it and altering its peace and tranquility) God will feed it once more with a heavenly meal, since you leave it free for it without any hampering. (*Living Flame of Love Canticle* 3, Verse 3, Section 15)

22. The third blind man is the soul itself, which not understanding itself, is troubled and injured: For as it knows only how to operate through the senses, when God wants to put it in this emptiness and solitude, where it cannot make use of the powers or perform acts, thinking itself useless, it tries to act more expressly and more sensory; and so it is distracted and filled with dryness and disgust, it which before enjoyed leisure, peace and spiritual silence, where God secretly communicated sweetness and flavor to it. And it will happen that God will try to keep it in this taciturn quietude, and that it will dispute in order to cry out with the imagination and walk with the understanding; like children that mothers carry in their arms, which scream and beat their feet to be put down; and so they do not go, or let their mothers go: or even like [*Short Method* Chapter 21, Number 5] a painter if he is painting the likeness of something and it shifts, he cannot do anything. The soul must therefore be on guard, that even though then it does not feel itself walk, it nevertheless walks must faster than if it walked with its own feet; for God carries it in his arms, and so it does not feel the path: and even though it thinks it is doing nothing, it is advancing more than if it were acting; because it is God who is operating; and if it does not perceive him, one should not be surprised, in that what God operates in the soul is not known by the senses. May it then leave itself in the hands of God, and trust in him; with that it will go about securely, and there is no danger, except when it on its own or by its own industry operates with its powers. (*Living Flame of Love Canticle* 3, Verse 3, Section 16)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA  
gives an account of

23. Taulere: If someone asks why it is necessary to renounce all images [It is good to notice that Taulere preached this doctrine publicly.]; one will answer, that it is because there is only one path to the simple and naked truth; if then one wants to reach the truth, it is necessary to little by little leave the path. (*Institution* Chapter 35)

24. D. Bartelemi of the Martyrs: As soon as the soul, which longs to reach this union, God calling it there, feels itself greatly inflamed by divine love, and attracted on high, that it quickly cuts off all kinds of images and runs to the Sancta Sanctorum, and to this interior silence in which there is no human operation, but only the divine; For there God is the one who operates, and man the one who suffers, or the one who receives: for when the powers of the soul are silenced and cease their own action, being finally delivered from all external imagination, God himself speaks and according to his will disposes and touches these powers of the spirit, performing a very excellent work in himself. O truly happy soul, which having left all its own operation is denuded of all the images in its memory! (*Spiritual Summary* Part 2, Chapter 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

25. -- It happens very often that whoever is delighted (in contemplation) not only ceases the operations of the exterior senses, so much that he is ignorant of what is done on the outside; but even though the fantastic and imaginative faculty is deprived of its action, so well that no apparition can be mixed up in it, or if it glides into it, it is completely repressed by the virtue of reason and superior will. (*Spiritual Summary* Part 2, Chapter 12, Section 1) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account of

26. St. Thomas: The intellectual and sensory operations hinder each other, as much because the attention is required for the works of each, as because the understanding mixes with the sensory since it receives it from the apparitions; and thus the purity of the understanding is not in the least soiled by the sensory operations. (Question 13, Article 4) (*Notes and Remarks on John of the Cross* Disciple 1, Section 1)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

27. From that comes that man does not want a renounced life, desiring to always have the satisfaction of his appetite for his own excellence. He does not want to go there where he does not know, and does not expose himself to being lost and surrendering himself to the guidance of God, seeing it only through an extremely removed faith, which has no strength in him for such a high outcome.

In truth when he acts through the way of understanding, the will is joined to it by natural following; and sometimes these two powers pulled and enlightened by God in order to know and love him. But assuming that in these two faculties there is no previous touch, or any infused or acquired habit, man remains lying helpless on earth, seeking his contentment and consolation in tastes and in creatures, as much as he can and is entitled to, often he even passes on to illicit pleasure [This is the difference between a person truly touch by God, and those who are said they are interior, and are not; that the first in their sorrows cannot seek consolation outside of God, or even find any when they are unfaithful enough to go looking for it: and the others on the contrary harm themselves with the pleasures of the senses from the deprivation of sensory consolations; and it is from that all the licentiousness is born.] and the complete lack of wanting to die renounced, for the love and good pleasure of God. Without a doubt in order to know and love God our powers must be exalted by him, according to the order that he usually keeps for that in spiritual men; and the sole faith according to the simple degree of men of the common run, will never give them the strength to be enough for that. The Holy Spirit sometimes operates admirable and extraordinary effects in certain men; but nature seems to do the same thing in those who appear naturally virtuous, though sometimes carried and inclined to some mortal vice. From where it comes that they all seem to be equally moved, by the high esteem that they make from God, up to dying for him if it were needed, which however is only a result of their good nature, and the same thing is seen often enough in good and generous warriors. That makes it very difficult to discern if these movements are of nature or of grace. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 11)

28. Hardly does anybody want to undertake this renounced life, even though everyone sees it very heroically practiced by our divine Savior. No one wants to imitate him at his own expense, if it is not but in a little thing, and never in everything and forever; and what is the most deplorable is that men are in this cowardliness, even after having felt the very strong attractions and operations of God. During such influences they promise marvels; but as soon as they are destitute of them, several among them have neither the heart nor the courage, to follow Jesus Christ entrusted with a little piece of his cross, and to suffer and die with him in the crosses of the body and the spirit. That makes him justly complain about men, who want to be his friends only at the table, leave him to the abandonment and at the mercy of his cruelest enemies, so as to suffer and die by their iniquities and mortal efforts. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 11)

29. Taking up the thread of our thought again, we say, that there will never be any renunciation in the soul [If it is necessary to have taste of God in order to renounce oneself, it is not therefore true that it is necessary to be completely renounced in order to taste him; the taste of God being the effective means for renouncement.] which has not been touched by God through sensitive love; and if besides that it does not love God in himself, more than its own gifts and

works, it will never come to receive the infusion of the very strong and very excellent divine habits which belong to the truly renounced life.

The reason is that this soul is still in the life of nature, even when it is excellently spiritualized, from which life it never wants to lose anything: if it loses in one point, for that it claims greater merit. So well that it knows only taste and light, will never know anything about true suffering, being removed from wanting to suffer as much as it is ignorant and loving of itself. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 9)

30. It is [The perfect renouncement of ourselves; which includes not only all the operations of self, but all that we are, subjecting the body to the spirit: this is the feeling of St. Catherine of Genes that I showed. See Mortification Number 3] this divine cult, that the Mystics firstly and so keenly persuade men of, as the binding, the means, and the principle of the true happiness of the human creature, lying in a mortal body, but fully subject to his spirit, without resistance or contradiction on his part. They make this display very vividly and savorously, in favor of these excellent men that the world does not know, even though they know the world very well and hold it in horror.

[Virtue Number 20] Not only the worldly, but even the holy and virtuous, very often make them suffer from keen and frequent persecutions, in that their path is unknown, as if infinitely different and removed from their own. The reason is that these virtuous people are full of their paths, not being able to think or believe that there can be better ones, or more excellent ones among men than theirs. They know only the self, chosen, pursued and curious exercises; and according to this they continually fill themselves up more and more with their own inventions, luring to them the gifts and feelings in order to take their own repose there. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 14)

31. When man has arrived at his center, then like a loving eagle, he rests in God very wantonly. The divine enjoyment occupies him in fullness of delights appreciably and perceptibly in a very simple, very subtle, and very spiritual manner, and most often over himself, over all senses and all perception. While he remains in his only industry, he is very removed from his entire loss and resolution, and his occupation toward God is very removed from center. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 23)

#### THE FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS

gives an account of

32. Blossius: While you are navigating on the stormy sea of this age, God will take you away and make you perhaps arrive at a port, where you will find yourself in a perfect nudity of all kinds of shapes and images: There will be no operation in your powers; and missing and desisting in yourselves in this way, you will happily pass into God. (*Mystic Conference* Part 19)



## SECTION 44 PRAYER

I will put PRAYER, MEDITATION and CONTEMPLATION together, all that being related.

Section 1: That everyone can perform Prayer.

### SHORT METHOD

Everyone is suitable for Prayer; and it is a dreadful misfortune, that almost everyone gets it in his mind that he is not called to Prayer. We are all [When it is said that all are called here, it is not meant that all are called to the same degree of accomplishment; but all are called to pray from the heart, to renounce oneself; and to bear their cross, to follow Jesus Christ: then this path is for all.] called to Prayer, as we are all called to salvation.

Prayer is nothing but the application of the heart to God, and the interior exercise of love. St. Paul commands us [I Thessalonians 5:17 to pray without ceasing. Our Lord says: [Mark 13: 33 & 37] I tell you all, be watchful and pray. All can then do Prayer, and all must do it.

But I agree that all cannot meditate, and very few are suited to it. Therefore it is not this Prayer that God asks for, or that is desired from you.

My very dear brothers, whoever among you wants to be saved, come all to do Prayer; you must live from Prayer, as you must live from love.

Come ignorant and stupid; you are all fit for Prayer; you who believe yourself incapable of it; it is you who are the most suited. (Chapter 1, Numbers 1-2)

In this occupation the most coarse and uncouth become the most able. (Chapter 23, Number 8)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. The perfection of all those who are enrolled in the Hierarchy, consists in making oneself like God, each according to his proportion and his measure. (*On the Heavenly Hierarchy* Chapter 3)
2. See Desire Number 1.
3. See Consistency Number 2.
4. See Desire Number 3.

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

5. See Desire Number 4.
6. She saw again, how God does not stop knocking at the heart of man, in order to enter there and justify his operation; and that no one will ever be able to complain, that God has not continually knocked and bumped against the door of his heart: because without exception for anyone he comes to everyone, and calls and attracts us all to him, not having more regard for the good than for the bad. (*Life* Chapter 13)
7. Man has been created for the end to be united to God, and to be transformed into him. (*Life* Chapter 32)

#### ST. TERESA

8. Therefore if Prayer is so useful and so necessary to those who do not serve God, but who offend and irritate him; and if one cannot truly find that it can cause any harm, that one does not discover a great damage to not do; why is that those who serve God, and who want to serve him, must leave it? Certainly I cannot understand for what reason, if it is not to endure the travails of this life with more bitterness and more troubles, and to close the avenues to divine consolation. In truth I have compassion for such people; for they serve God at their own expense, in that for the others who give themselves up to prayer, it is Our Lord who bears the cost; since for a little work, he gives tastes and sweets to bear the toils of this pilgrimage. – I will say only that the door through which he did me so many favors, has been Prayer: if one comes to close it, I do not know through where they will enter; for even though he wants to enter, in order to console a soul, to caress it, and to take his revels with it, he finds no entry there, wanting it alone, clean and with the desire to receive his graces. (*Life* Chapter 8)

9. I hope that Our Lord will help me in this undertaking, his Majesty knowing well, that often the achievement of obedience, I have no other intention in this but to release the souls to such a sublime good: I will say nothing that I did not experience a lot. –

Consequently I say, that if there are people who have reached the communications of Prayer, with which Our Lord favored this wretched woman, (now there must be several) and that they want to confer with me about, scared of being lost; I hope that Our Lord will assist his servant to pass further on, and make some profit for the help of his truths. (*Life* Chapter 18)

10. Now although I said some, if there are few who enter into this [fifth] Residence that I will tell now. There is yet some more or some less in this, that is why I said that most enter into it. (*Chastisement Dem. 5* Chapter 1)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

11. O souls created for these splendors, and which are invited there, what are you doing? In what are you entertained? O deplorable blinding of the children of Adam, since they do not see gout, surrounded by such a great light, and since they are deaf to these high screams; for as much as they look for the splendors and the glory of the world, they remain miserable, abject and unworthy of such a great good! (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 39)

12. O that this was a good place to notify the souls that God leads to these delicate unctions, that they certainly look at what they do, and in which hand they are placed, for fear of turning around; if it was only that this would seem outside of the subject that we are dealing with. But I have such regret and compassion in my heart, to see souls that God guides to these delicate unctions retreat, not only not letting themselves be anointed so that the unction passes further on, but also in losing its effects; I cannot pass beyond without advising them of what they must do in order to avoid this great injury. – Now one must first know that if the soul, looks for God, its Beloved certainly looks for it more: and if it sends him its loving desires, which are also as sweet-smelling to it as the wand of smoke, which come forth from the aromatic Drugs of myrrh and incense; he communicates to it the scent of his balms, with which he attracts it and makes it run after him, which are his divine inspirations and touches; which being his are always holy and ruled by motives of perfection of the law of God and faith, through the perfection of which the soul must always approach God more. And so the soul must understand, that the desire of God in all the favors that he does for it by these unctions and scents of his balms, is to dispose it for other more delicate, ointments prove in the taste of God; until it reaches such a pure and delicate disposition, that it deserves the union of God and the transformation into all his powers.

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If the Master does not experience with sublime things, he will not dispatch the soul when God attracts it, and he could do it much wrong; because ignoring the paths of the spirit, he often makes the souls lose the unction of these precious ointments with which the Holy Spirit disposes them for itself, governing them by other base means that he has read, which are useful only for beginners: for such people do not know any more about it. (See Prayer Section 2, Number 19) (*Living Flame of Love Canticle 3*, Verse 3, Section 4)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

13. Father Louis of Leon: Something now remains to be said to those who find danger in these books, because of the delicacy of the matter of which they are dealing with, that they say is not for everyone: For as there are three kinds of people, with which some deal with Prayer, the others who could deal with it if they wanted to, and others who wanted it could not have it, because of the condition of their state, I ask who are those who are in danger from these books? The spirituals? Not, if it is only that it is a detrimental thing namely what one does and what one professes. Those who have the disposition to be spiritual? Still less; because not only do they here find a Guide in order to lead them when they will be spirituals; but also who excites and animates them to be so, which is a very great good. Now the last ones where will be the danger for them? To know and understand that God behaves lovingly toward men? That he who is denuded of everything, finds it? To know and learn the caresses that God gives to the souls, the difference between the tastes that he gives them, the way in which he purifies and refines them? What is there in this, which does not sanctify he who will read it, being indeed understood and heard? Which does not bring about the admiration of God, and does not inflame him in his love? If the considerations of these exterior works that God does in the creation and in the government of things are a school of common usefulness for all men, how can the knowledge of his secret wonders be detrimental to anybody?

And when someone by his bad disposition has received injury from it, would it be just for that to prevent such a great profit, and for so many people? The Gospel is not published, because it is the occasion for a greater loss to he who does not receive it, as St. Paul said [Philippians 1:28 (KJV) “*And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.*”] What Scriptures will one find, even

though one understands the holy and divine ones, from which a badly disposed spirit cannot conceive of an error? When one must bring judgment on things, one must be on guard and consider, if they are good in themselves and suitable for their end, and not for what will cause the bad use of some; for if one stops at that, there is nothing so holy that it cannot be forbidden. What is more holy than the Sacraments? How many are there who become worse by the bad use that they make of it? The Devil, as prudent and watchful of our father, changes different colors, and shows himself to the understandings of some, held back, circumspect and caring for the good of his neighbor, in order to in the eyes of the world ravish that which is good and profitable and common, in order to avoid a particular injury. He indeed knows that he would lose more through those who would advance and would become perfect spirituals by the reading of these Books, that by the small number of those who would fall because of their indisposition; and thus so that one may avoid the injury of these ones, he exaggerates and represents their loss, which he keeps in his fine threads by a thousand other paths: even though, as I was saying, I know nobody so badly disposed, who draws his ruin from the knowledge of paths which guide the souls to God, in which all these Writings end.

I fear only for some, who want to govern and guide each one by themselves, who improve what they do not arrange; and who procure that what is not according to their judgment, has no credit or authority: which I do not to satisfy; because their error is born from their will, and consequently they would not like to keep themselves as contents: but I beg the others to not give them any credence, because they do not deserve it. (In the Letter put before the Works of St. Teresa) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 5, Section 3)

14. St. Bonaventure: I therefore present this book and give it to be seen, not by the Philosophers, not by the wise men of the world, not by the great Theologians perplexed by an infinity of questions; but by the ignorant and coarse men who strive to love God more than to know a lot: for the art of loving is not taught by disputing, but by operating. Now I consider that the things which are contained here, will not be able to be understood by these questionnaires, eminent in every kind of science, but little in the love of Jesus Christ; from which it comes out that I did not plan to write for those if it is only releasing and forgetting all the things which belong to the world, they remain enslaved and embraced by the only desire of their Creator. (Preface of the Regime of Conscience) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 6, Section 3)

15. St. Bernard: See Understanding Number 3.

16. Gerson: For the things which are felt and experienced interiorly, the idiot contemplatives taste and receive these divine things more perfectly than several scholars. (Mystic Theology Consideration 3, Alph. 64, Letter N) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 6, Section 3)

17. D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: This mystic wisdom, that St. Dennis properly calls the wisdom of the Christians, is usually communicated more promptly and more highly to simple idiots, who have no other care than that of making their salvation with fear and trembling, than to the learned Theologians, if it is not that they study for humility with all the affection of their heart. (Spiritual Summary Chapter 13, Section 3) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 6, Section 3)

18. St. Teresa (speaking to her Confessor): May he not take fright, and may these things not seem impossible to him; everything is possible to Our Lord: but may he endeavor to vivify his faith, and be humbled by his divine Majesty perhaps making a little old woman more learned than him in this skill, even though he may be very eminent in doctrine. (Life Chapter 34) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 6, Section 3)

19. Suarez: Often the simple people helped by divine grace penetrate and weigh the truth more profoundly than the scholars. (Book 2 of the Prayer Chapter 10, Number 8) (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 1, Chapter 6, Section 3)

20. See Short Way Number 11.

21. St. Gregory: See Short Way Number 10.

22. Albarado: It is a great mistake to think that the contemplation is only for those who are very perfect and extremely, and not for those who are beginning. (Art of Living Well Verse 1, Book 1, Chapter 15) and in (Book 2, Chapter 1) he says that following the doctrine of St. Bonaventure, of Henry de Palme, and other Doctors, according to the ordinary law, one is accustomed to remaining only fifteen days in the purgative path, before the entry is opened to the illuminative; and finally several signal Doctors and Masters also teach the same. (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross Part 2, Chapter 21, Section 2)

23. St. Augustine: On these words of Psalms 71:3 (or 72:3 {KJV}) “**The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.**”) May the mountains receive peace for the people, and the hills justice; says; That the mountains are the ones which excel in holiness in the Church, which are capable of teaching the others, speaking in such a way that they are faithfully instructed, and living so much that they can be righteously imitated. The hills are the ones, which follow their excellence by their obedience.

The mountains, says Cardinal Hugues, also signify the Contemplatives who need peace, because the troubled eye cannot contemplate the heavenly things. We draw from this that the mountains which must receive this doctrine. [Philippians 4:7] And the peace of God, which surpasses every sense, in order to communicate it to the people, are men eminent in holiness, great spiritual masters, near heaven through sublime Contemplation, and the goods they receive from there in order to communicate them to the inferior men, and for the profit of the disciples: this is what means, that they may receive peace for the people.

Following that this so sublime and exalted doctrine, which deals closely with the perfect peace and union of the soul of God, communicated to this very high mountain of our Blessed Father, (John of the Cross) so eminent in holiness, as is seen in his life, and in the great and continual miracles that God does through him, Superior in quality of Contemplative, raised Cherub in and embraced Seraphim, has been in favor of the people and for their use, not having great need for his look of letters or exterior words that is why he wrote it so that it can be useful for all, and can declare the summit of the union and contemplation that God had communicated to them, with very important instructions, that he spreads out here for the masters and the disciples: and that is God having revealed this doctrine to them, and having taught it to us for this end, he had reason to put it in a language which could indeed express the greatness of it and could together facilitate the mind to it for those for whom it is written. (*Notes and Remarks on John of the Cross* Disciple 3, Section 1)

24. The Wiseman (Sage) makes himself seen in his words [Ecclesiasticus 20:29 – “**A wise man shall advance himself with his words, and a prudent man shall please the great ones.**”]. The Scripture of the Wiseman (Sage) is a portrait and a living image of what he is. – The Wiseman (Sage) therefore reveals himself in his books, -- so that one may have high feelings for God, who gives such light, who communicated such graces and favors, and who has such friends. And it is here, if what he says is able to imitate, that he incites [It is not therefore dangerous to write about these things.] to imitate of him, not only by the goodness of what is proposed, but still more by the practical exhortation of the example; and if that is wonderful and extraordinary, one praises and admires him: by doing this everyone profits, and God is glorified by all; which is what one directly claims in that. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Disciple 3, Section 2)

25. What [Ecclesiasticus 20:32 – “**Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is not seen: what profit is there in them both?**”] profit is there in mute wisdom and hidden treasure? Accursed be he who does not draw his knife, who does not unsheathe his sword in order to perform a bloody slaughter, which does not uncover or reveal the truth as Our Lord Jesus Christ says. Accursed [Jeremiah 48:10 {KJV} “**Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.**”] he who draws back his blade from the blood. These are the words of Jeremiah. Thus the doctrine of this Blessed Father, (John of the Cross) being righteously cruel, without pardoning not only the flesh and the blood, but the soul and the spirit, since he enters there and divides in order to unite perfectly to God; he there who would put this sword either in the sheath of silence, which would be unbearable, or in another language less received and less universal [Then he claims that many profit from these kinds of writings.] than ours, would be guilty. –

That is why in these things one must not watch the abuse of some, (this would be to completely close the door to the good;) but one must watch for the common profit, and for what the thing about which it deals cleanly and directly promises. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Disciple 3, Section 2)

26. St. Bernard: (Sermon 62 on the Canticle) speaking about the very eminent doctrine of St. Paul, says: After having penetrated the first and second heaven, of a subtle but pious curiosity, finally did not this kindly scrutinizer lure it from the third heaven? But he did not hide it from us, but presented in clear words, the most faithfully that has been possible for him.

Therefore the doctrines in order to be high, must not be hidden: and when they are spread out so polished and detailed, that speaking prudently and morally one cannot fear any injury from it, there is no doubt that it is very fitting to publish them. –

The best way to treat it is to do it with gratitude and submission to their incomprehensibility. He who then urges one to this gratitude and submission in pure faith, preferring it to all other intelligence and account, and to the habit of our spirit, capturing everything that he could do by himself under the obedience of faith; he, I say would be in accordance with the Saints: and dealing with ever exalted things, he would always leave them very exalted; and speaking of those things which are ineffable he would be silenced by it in stammering out something, because he tries to recollect us in the holy and divine silence; and knowing he would ignore, in that he discourses about subjugating knowledge to gratitude that one must have for this splendor; and writing he would not write, because he writes to give

to understand, that these matters are above all the Scriptures: which is the honest intention of the Saints, namely from St. Dennis. – For it would indeed be a severe thing, that those, who claim to serve God more purely, were of worse condition than the others; and that wanting to serve God in this exalted degree, there was no instruction for them; principally there being few Confessors and Masters, who can give any in this high degree, themselves needing to learn it from someone else. And who will approve, that these souls in order to not understand the languages and sciences, are deprived of teachings required for their advance and direction? -- The disadvantages which can proceed [It is certain that corrupted people understand and explain all things according to corruption; like the spiders which draw poison from the same flowers that the bees draw honey from. One must not judge a book by the taste or the discourse of a corrupted person, but by that of a pure, interior person who judges according to the spirit.] from spite or gross ignorance, must not hold us back and distract us from the good; otherwise it would be necessary to suppress the Holy Scripture, because the heretics misuse it. May one therefore burn the Ecclesiastical Stories, and so many rare things, which are written in our language. Why communicate in vulgar language the Writings of St. Teresa filled with a sublime doctrine? May all that from which one draws so much benefit, no longer be exhibited to the public; so that this one or another, whose friend of himself and his greatness, does not take the opportunity from that to be deceived and deceive. May the glory of God be hidden; may his marvels not be known; may one close this path through which so many people are spurred to love him and serve him. In the things one must not look at the Pharisaical misuse or scandal, but the common profit. (*Notes on John of the Cross* Disciple 3, Section 5)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

27. There is no occupation, however distracting it may be, which can hinder the practice of the Prayer of Repose, when it is taken according to the rules of the will of God; for this Sovereign Lord, calling all men to prayer [Luke 18:1 {KJV} – “**And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint,**”], even continual, without doubt he wants them to give, if they know how and want to make use of, being able to practice it at all times and in all things. (Book 3, Treatise 5, Chapter 1, Section 2)

28. This is the most common feeling of the Doctors of Mystic Theology, who consider that simple people ignorant of human sciences are more fitting than the learned, to learn and practice this Mystic Science. God, says Harphius, [*Mystic Theology* Book 3 Preface] communicates this Mystic Theology to simple men, so that by these means the humble are consoled and cheerful, seeing that an old woman and a rustic shepherd can be raised to these thing with purity of spirit, better than all those who are swollen with worldly wisdom, which cannot reach this by any industry or intelligence, however penetrating it might be.

Even though Mystic Theology, says Gerson, [*Mystic Theology* Consideration 30] is supreme and very perfect knowledge, -- all the faithful nevertheless can have it, be they an idiot, or a silly little woman. He confirms elsewhere [Consideration 9] and even proves that the simple and the idiots reach Mystic Theology by faith, hope and charity, sooner and higher than the learned, -- reporting some answers noticed by St. Thomas for the question, why the simple are sometimes more devout than the Learned, which are, (1) that the faith of such people is less troubled by the phantoms of opposing opinions, that they do not understand, and which they do not think about; (2) that they are normally more humble, and it is to them that God communicates his graces, abandoning the haughty; and (3) that the simple care more for their salvation, and operate it with fear.

In the same passage he assures that a certain person was used to saying, that after having spent forty years or more in leafing through, studying, reading, meditating on several things, he had found nothing more concise and effective to acquire Mystic Theology, than to make oneself below God like a child, seeing that he himself made himself a child for us, and as such gave himself to us. And elsewhere [Consideration 11] he shows that with a familiar comparison.

Let us consider, he says, two men, one of whom is very discerning in the senses of sight and hearing, but bewildered in those of smell, taste and touch; and suppose the other is blind and deaf, but very discerning in the three other senses: it is certain that this man will be able to feel greater delights than the first. Let us apply this, to Mystic Theology. The Philosophers and the Theologians, who are learned, have sharp and penetrating spiritual sight and hearing, but it happens that several among them have very dulled other senses. – One should not be surprised if the simple men without doctrine, who are like deaf and blind men in every other science, except in faith, delight in God, whom they love and desire. And in this way they feel him, taste him, smell his goodness, and by embracing him touch him, having through a purity of life and simplicity purged and reformed senses, which in the vicious others are completely stupid, without being able to feel the very sweet divine things, even though they see and hear them. –

Dennis the Carthusian Monk [Sermon 1 Non Pontiff Conference] speaking about Rusbroche, calls him an idiot for hardly being able to understand Latin, however he also calls him another St. Dennis. –

Taulere, scholar and great contemplative [In his Life] was instructed by a man ignorant of human Letters (the Humanities), but who was extremely spiritual. (Book 3, Treatise 5, Chapter 1, Section 2)

29. Just as, says Gerson [Mystic Theology Consideration 31] one must hide the words of Mystic Theology from many scholars and men of letters, who are called Wiseman (Sages), Philosophers and Theologians; so must one teach it to many simple men, without doctrine or studying provided that they are faithful. (Book 3, Treatise 3, Section 1)

## Section 2: PRAYER AND MEDIATION

I continue on Prayer.

### SHORT METHOD

All those who want to do prayer, can do it easily with the help of ordinary grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are common to all Christians.

Prayer is the [St. Teresa says the same thing. (See Prayer Section 1, Number 8 and Section 2, Number 4)] key to perfection and sovereign happiness, it is the effective means to undo us from all the vices, and to acquire all the virtues; for the great way to become perfect is to walk in the presence of God. (Chapter 1, Number 3)

Go then to prayer, not from wanting to enjoy God; but to be there like he wants: that will make you equal in drought and abundance. (Chapter 4, Number 3)

O if you knew the goods, which come back to the soul from this prayer, one would do nothing else. (Chapter 20, Number 4)

### MEDITATION

#### SHORT METHOD

All [This has been seen above section 1] can therefore do prayer, and all must do it. But I agree that all cannot meditate, and very few are suited to it. Therefore it is this prayer that God asks for and desire from you. – You must live from prayer as you must live from love. (Chapter 1, Numbers 1-2)

You must be taught to do a Prayer [All this is included in the proposition; all can do prayer.], which can be done at anytime; which does not turn one away from exterior occupations; that Princes, Kings, Prelates, Priests, Magistrates, Soldiers, Children, Artisans, Laborers, Women and the Sick can do. This Prayer is not Prayer of the head, but PRAYER OF THE HEART.

It is not a prayer of thought alone, because the mind of man is so limited, that if he thinks about one thing, he cannot think about the other: but it is the Prayer of the heart, which is not interrupted by all the occupations of the mind.

Nothing can interrupt the Prayer of the heart but disordered affections: And when one has once tasted God and the sweetness of his love, it is impossible to taste anything other than him.

Nothing is easier [St. Teresa proved it in what I reported about her Writings, that in a short time one arrived at prayer. (See Short Way Number 5)] than having God and tasting him. He is more in us than we ourselves are. He has more desire to give himself to us, than we have to possess him. There is the only way to seek him, which is so easy and natural that the air that we breathe is not more so. Yes, you who are so rough, who believe that you are not fit for anything, you can live from prayer and from God himself, as easily and continually as you live from the air that you breathe. (Chapter 1, Numbers 4-5)

There are two ways to introduce the souls into Prayer, which one can and must [I am not therefore saying, that one must not pass through this way, but indeed not remain attached there, and leave them as soon as God lures one to something else.] make use of for a while. One is Meditation; the other is meditated reading.

Meditated reading is nothing but taking strong truths, either for speculation or for practice, preferring the former to the latter, and reading in this way.

You will take your truth such as you want to choose it, and you will then read two or three lives of it in order to digest and taste them, trying to take the essence of it, and keep yourself fixed in the passage you are reading as long as you find taste there, and not going on until this passage is insipid to you. –

The other is Meditation, which is done in the hour chosen for that, and not during the time for reading. I believe [it is easy to see that I am not excluding Meditation, as the first way and passage.] that it would be good to go about it in this manner.

After having placed oneself in the presence of God through an act of lively faith, one must read something substantial, and gently stop there above, not with reason, but only to fix the mind, observing that the principle exercise must be the presence of God. (Chapter 2, Numbers 1-2)

Those who do not know how to read will not be deprived of prayer for that. Jesus Christ is the great book written on the outside and on the inside, who will teach them all things.

They must practice this method. Firstly, they must learn a fundamental truth, which is, that [Luke 17:21] the Kingdom of God is inside of them, and that it is there that they must look for him.

The Priests must teach their Parishioners to do prayer like they teach them the Catechism. They teach them the end (reason) for which they have been created, but they do not teach them enough to enjoy their end (goal). (Chapter 3, Number 1)

The second degree is called by some Contemplation, Prayer of faith and repose; others give it the name Prayer of simplicity; and it is this last term that one must use, being more appropriate than that of Contemplation; which signifies a prayer more advanced than the one I am speaking about.

When the soul has then exerted itself for some time, as has been said, it feels that little by little the ability to apply itself to God is given it; it begins to recollect itself more easily: Prayer becomes easy, gentle and agreeable for it: it knows that this is the path to finding God: it smells the scent of his perfumes.

Then it must change methods. –

Firstly, as soon as it places itself in the presence of God with faith, and it recollects itself, may it remain like this for a little while in a respectful silence.

If as early as the beginning, by performing its act of faith, it feels a small taste of the presence of God, may it remain there, without troubling itself about anything or passing beyond; and may it keep what is given to it while it lasts.

If it leaves, may it animate its will with some tender affection; and if starting with the first affection it finds itself put back into its gentle peace, may it remain there. One must gently blow on the fire, and as soon as it is lit stop breathing on it; for whoever wants to still blow on it, will extinguish it.

I ask especially that one never finish prayer, without remaining in a respectful silence for a little while toward the end.

It is still of great consequence for the soul to go to prayer with courage, and bring to it a pure, disinterested love. (Chapter 4, Numbers 1-3)

If all those who work toward the conquest of souls, tried to win them over with heart, putting them first in prayer and the life interior, they would make infinite and lasting conversions. But as long as one goes about it only on the outside, and instead of attracting the souls to Jesus Christ by the occupation of the heart in him, they are only laden with a thousand precepts for exterior exercises; it only produce a little bit of fruit and does not last. (Chapter 23, Number 1)

In this occupation often the coarsest men become the most able ones; because they go there more simply and more cordially. The Spirit of God does not need our adjustments, when it pleases him he takes shepherds to make Prophets out of them. (Chapter 23, Number 8)

It is impossible to arrive at the divine union [This has been proven. (See Acts, Annihilation, Operations of Self)] by the path of mediation alone, or even by the path of affections, or of any prayer however luminous and understood it may be. There are several reasons for this: here are the principle ones. Firstly according to Scripture; [Exodus 33:20] No man will see God, as long as he is living. Now every exercise of discursive Prayer, or even of active Contemplation, regarded as an end, and not as a disposition to the passive one, are living exercises, through which we cannot see God; which is to say, be united to him. (Chapter 24, Number 1)

## AUTHORITIES

### CASSIEN

1. The Abbot Isaac says, that he learned this maxim from St. Anthony, that he calls heavenly and more than human: prayer is not perfect when the solitary (recluse) man knows what he is doing when he prays. (*Conference 9*, Chapter 30)
2. We pray in secret when it is only our heart, which prays, so that the Powers of darkness cannot know the nature of our prayer. So we must pray in great silence, in order to hide our prayer from our invisible enemies, who makes traps for us, particularly during this time. (*Conference 4*, Chapter 34)
3. See Non-Desire Number 1.

### ST. TERESA

4. I see clearly how merciful Our Lord was to me, seeing that I had to converse with the world, to give myself courage to do prayer. I say courage; in that I do not know which thing of all the things, which are in the world, it is necessary to have more of. –

Now I said all this, so that one may see the mercy of God and my ingratitude, and so that one may know the great good that his Majesty does to a soul to dispose it to perform prayer with affection, even though it does not have as much disposition as is required; and as God conducts it to the port of salvation, if it perseveres there, notwithstanding sins, temptations and the falls of a thousand ways, in which the Devil could engage it: which I hold as certain. – According to the experience that I have in this, I can say, that whoever has begun to do prayer, must never quit it, whatever

offenses he may commit, since it is the means through which he will be able to find his cure; and without that he will have must more difficulty: he may be watchful to not let himself go to the temptation with which the Devil deceived me, which is, to leave this holy exercise because of humility. –

Now whoever has not yet begun to exert himself in prayer, I pray him for the love of Our Lord to not deprive himself of such a great good. There is nothing to fear here, but everything is desirable there: for although he may not advance and not strive to be perfect, so that he deserves the tastes and caresses with which God favors the perfect men; at least he will warn of this, that he will come to know the path of heaven, and if he perseveres, I hope by the mercy of God that his perseverance is not vain, since no one ever took him as a friend, without him being well rewarded for it: In that to do mental prayer, in any opinion, is nothing but treating and communicating with friendship, often conversing alone with him that we know brings us affection. (*Life* Chapter 8)

5. Now I had this way of prayer, which is, that not being able to discourse with the understanding; I tried to produce Our Lord Jesus Christ inside of me; and in my opinion I found more pith (essence) and more affection in the places where I saw him more alone. It seemed to be that being alone and grieved, he had to admit me like a person who is needy.

I had many of these simplicities, but I found myself especially well in the Prayer of the Garden. – For several years when I commended myself to God before going to sleep, I always thought a little bit about this mystery of the Prayer of the Garden, not even yet being a Nun, in that I had been told that practicing that one earned several indulgences. And as for me I hold that my soul benefited much by this means, in that through that I began to do prayer, without knowing what it was; and the great habit that I had taken up prevented me from omitting these devotions no more than making the sign of the cross before resting. (*Life* Chapter 9)

6. In pondering some mystery of passion, it is good to discourse for a short time, and one must not weary oneself by always examining these things in detail; but after having attained the understanding and having put it in the silence, one must remain there with Our Lord, enjoying his lovable presence. – Whoever can do this, although this is the beginning of prayer, will find a great profit in it, and this manner of prayer produces much fruit: at least my soul experienced it. (*Life* Chapter 13)

7. Now all this is accompanied by a very great consolation, and is done with so little work, that the prayer does not tire one out in the least even though it may last a long time. (*Life* Chapter 14)

8. Our Lord gives tokens of affection, tastes and consolations to people in a bad condition, -- to see if by this favor they would like to be disposed to often enjoy him; but if they are not disposed to that, forgive them, my Lord, for that is a great evil. – I hold that for me there are several people that Our Lord tests in this manner, and few who are disposed to enjoy this grace; for when he gives it, I assert as certain that he never stops giving until he puts us in a very high degree.

[Presence of God Number 10] When we do not deliver ourselves to his divine Majesty with such full will, as he delivers himself to us, he does enough to let us remain in mental prayer, and to visit us from time to time like workers who work in his vineyard: but these others are cherished children that Our Lord always keeps near himself, and that he would never want to put apart from his loving presence, because they also do not want to be moved away from him: he seats them at his table and shares with them the foods that he eats, even to the point of removing, as is said, the morsel from his mouth in order to give it to them. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 16)

9. It is also an excellent remedy to take a good book in the vernacular, to recollect the understanding, in order to pray vocally by this means, and to little by little accustom the soul to it through attractions and artifices, in order to not disgust or frighten it. – If we do not proceed in this way, and if we do not walk thus little by little, never will we do anything. And if you get used to what I said, you will draw such a great profit from it, that when I want to announce it to you, I will not be able to do so. Therefore keep yourself nearby this good Master, well resolved to learn what he will teach you, and Our Lord will make good disciples of you, and will not leave you if you do not leave him. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 26)

10. See Vocal Prayer Number 12.

11. God sees that the soul is lost and estranged from self by the vehemence of the love that it has for him, and that the same force of love removed from it the discourse of the understanding in order to be able to love him more. (*Conceptions of the Love of God* Chapter 6)



12. I believe that you will have already learned in books of prayer, how they advise the soul to enter inside of self: now this is what I say in this place: A short time ago a very scholarly personage told me, that the souls who do not perform prayer, are like a paralytic or paralyzed body, which though it has feet and hands cannot help itself. (*Chastisement 1 Dem. 1* Chapter 1)

13. It matters greatly to every soul which does prayer, either a little, or a lot, to not be too reserved or held in straitened circumstances; but it must be allowed to go by all these lodgings on high, down below and on the sides, since Our Lord wanted to favor it with such great dignity: May it be confined so much, as to want to remain in a room for a long time, although it may be in its own knowledge; for even though it is so necessary, - that the soul occupied in the knowledge of itself believes me, and it sometimes takes the effort, to consider the greatness and the Majesty of its God: for there it will see its baseness better than inside itself; and it will be more free of the beasts and vermin which enter into the first lodgings. (*Chastisement 1 Dem. 1* Chapter 2)

14. Take good note, my daughters, of what I am going to say. Every pretension of whoever begins to perform prayer, must be to resolve himself, and to dispose himself, and to work with all possible diligence, to make his will consistent with God's; and as I will say after, and know for certain that the greatest perfection that can be obtained in this spiritual path lies in that. Whoever has that more perfectly, will receive more from Our Lord, and will be furthered in this path. Do not think, that there is another Arabesque (Arabian) language, or other unknown things, for all our good consists in that. If we fail even in the beginning, immediately wanting that God does our will, and that he leads us through the path that we desire, what firmness could this building have? (*Chastisement 1 Dem. 11* Chapter 1)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

15. The soul which claims to reach the union of this sovereign repose in this life, must pass through all the degrees of considerations, shapes and accounts without stopping, seeing that they have [*Short Method* Chapter 24, Numbers 1-2] no proportion or similarity with the term toward which they set out, which is God. - From where it comes that some Spirituals greatly deceive themselves, who having exerted themselves to near God through images, forms and meditations fitting for beginners, God wanting to attract them to more spiritual and more interior goods which are invisible, already removing from them the taste and the essence of meditation which is done through discourse, they do not succeed in undoing themselves from it, and do not dare or know how to leave these palpable means they are accustomed to, and how to still strive to keep them, wanting to go by their consideration and meditation of forms like beforehand. - The more the soul advances in spirit, the more it ceases the work of the powers in particular objects, placing itself in a single general and pure act; consequently the powers cease operating, as they were doing before, in order to arrive at where the soul is, just as the feet stop after having accomplished their day's march. For if one had to walk forever, one would never arrive; and if everything was means, when would one enjoy ends and terms? It is a pity to see that their soul wanting to be in this peace and repose of interior quietude, where it is filled with peace and the meal of God, they marry it and draw it outside to the most exterior, and want it to go back to walking through where it was walking before, and to leave the end and the term where it is already vesting, in order to again take up the means which set it on its course, which are the considerations: which happens only with a great disgust and repugnance from the soul, which longs to remain in this peace as if in its own center; like he who has arrived with pain in his place of repose, if he is made to return to work, that weighs heavily on him. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 12)

16. Here we will give some signs that the Spiritual must see in himself in order to know if it is appropriate to leave [the forms and discourses of meditation] during that time or not.

The first is to see in self that he can no longer [It is to be noted, that the people who have fought the attractions of grace through their own efforts, and who have passed that time, can easily mediate after, because they have exerted themselves with force to reason, and formed the habit to do so. It is not for them that the Blessed speaks here: for it is wished that they might change behavior, it is feared that they might never do so: he is speaking for the beginners.] meditate or operate with the imagination, and that there is no more taste like before. The second, when he sees that he has no inclination or will to put the imagination; or the senses, into any particular, exterior or interior thing: I am not saying that it does not come and go, (for even in a great recollection it does not fail to wander;) but that the soul does not take pleasure to expressly applying it in other things. The third and most certain is, if the soul takes pleasure in being alone with loving attention to God, without particular consideration, in interior peace, quietude and repose, without action or exercise of the powers, -- at least where there is discourse, which is to go from one thing to another, but only that it remains with the knowledge and the general and loving glance, that we call without particular comprehension of other things. -

It is certainly true, that in the beginning of this state one almost does not see this loving notice, for two reasons: one, because in the beginning this loving notice is very subtle and delicate and almost imperceptible; the other, because the soul having gotten used to the other exercise of meditation, which is more perceptible, it almost does not feel or perceive this other exercise of meditation, which is more perceptible, it almost does not feel or perceive this other imperceptible new thing, which is already purely of the spirit; especially when from a lack of understanding this new

state, it is not allowed to rest in that, procuring the other, which is more perceptible: with which although the interior and loving peace is more abundant, it is not given room to feel it or enjoy it. But the more the soul is made able to let itself be attained and put in peace, [This is the complete method given in the *Short Method* (Chapter 3, Numbers 3-4), to let God's operation little by little surmount one's own, leaving it only little by little, as one feels this divine taste or loving attention. Please be God if those who fight this state, would experience it!] it will always go about growing in this peace, and will feel more this general and loving notice of God which it tastes more than of anything else: in that the notice brings to the soul peace, repose, flavor and a pleasure without pain. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 13)

17. The first reason [why one must leave the perceptible Meditation] is, because in a certain way the soul was already given every spiritual good that it had to find in the things of God, through the path of meditation and discourse. – For usually, when the soul receives some new spiritual good, it receives it by tasting it; -- and so it benefits the soul: this would be wonderful if it benefited the soul differently; because that is done in the way that the Philosophers say, what has taste nourishes. That is why Job said: [Job 6:6] Can an insipid thing be eaten without being salted?

The second reason is, that the soul during this time already has the spirit of meditation in substance and habit; because the end of meditation, is to draw some knowledge and love from God, and each time that the soul attracts him and is an act; [*Short Method* Chapter 22, Number 3] and as several acts in any state come to engender a habit in the soul; so are many acts of this loving knowledge, that the soul drew out from time to time, continue so much by use of them, that a habit is made of them. Which God is also accustomed to doing without the means of these acts of meditation, (at least without him having precede many of them) putting them forthwith into contemplation; in such a way that what the soul pulled from it before from time to time working to meditate in particular notices, has already in it through use turned into habit and substance of a loving general notice, not distinct, or particular like before. That is why putting itself in prayer, like the one which already drew the water it drinks at its ease, without it being necessary to draw it from the aqueducts of past considerations. – Because it would happen to it like it happens to the child, who receiving the milk that he finds gather in the nipple, it is nevertheless taken away from him, and it is hoped that with his diligence in handling and squeezing, he will return once again to gather and draw it: Or like he who having removed the skin of something, tastes the substance, if he were made to remove it to begin again to taste the same skin which is already cut; for he would no longer find any skin there, and would no longer taste any of the substance that he already had in his hands, like he who leaves what he has in order to take what he does not have. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel* Book 2, Chapter 14)

18. They must no longer concern themselves with discourse and meditation, since, as I said, it is no longer the time for them: but they may let the soul remain in repose and tranquility, even though it seems to them that they are doing nothing and losing time, and that proceeds from their tepidness, to not desire to think about something; seeing that they will not do little to keep patient, and to persevere in prayer, leaving only the soul free, and unbound from all the notices and thoughts, without concerning themselves about what they think or ponder, contending themselves only with a loving slight rested in God, and to remain without solicitude, and without ardent desire to feel and taste him; in that all these pretensions worry and distract the soul from the tranquil repose, and from the gentle leisure of contemplation which is given there: And whatever scruples they have about losing time, and that it would be better to do something else, since in prayer they can neither do nor think anything; may they nevertheless be patient and keep themselves quiet, being persuaded that they go to prayer to take their pleasure and to remain in liberty and latitude of spirit.

[Operation of Self, Number 10] For if by themselves they want to perform something with the interior powers, they will hinder and lose the good that God, through means of this peace and leisure of the soul, goes about etching and imprinting in it. For as if it [*Short Method*, Chapter 21, Section 5] were drawing a face, and the person moved to do something, that would prevent the painter from working, and finish his begun work: in the same way when the soul is in peace and interior repose, whatever operation or affection it exercises, indeed even a glance which is done with solitude; will unfailingly be a distraction for him, and will make him feel the dryness and the emptiness of the sense; because the more it claims some support of affection and notice, the more will it feel the lack, which can no longer be made up for by this path. The soul must not then be concerned; here, if it loses the operation of its powers: on the contrary it must be content to lose them soon; because not impeding the operation of the infused contemplation; that God does about giving with more peaceful abundance, it is recreated, and it gives place to it burning and being inflamed in the spirit of love, that this obscure and secret contemplation drags about with itself and attaches to the soul. (*Dark Night of the Soul* Book 1, Chapter 10)

19. Such people do not know more about it than to lead the beginners, (and still God knows how) although God calls the souls more, they do not want to let them pass further than these beginnings and these discursive means, with which they cannot produce a lot of fruit. [One does not produce great fruit through meditation: So the *Short Method* (Chapter 24, Number 1) is not wrong to say that one does not arrive through this path at the union with God.]

To better understand this, it is necessary to know that the state of beginners is to ponder and discourse. But when that is still not in the least done, as soon as [*Short Method* Chapter 4, Number 1] God starts to put them in this state of contemplation; which is used to being done is a very short time, principally in Monks; because having renounced all things of the age, they more promptly adapt their senses and appetites to God: and that being done, there remains only to suddenly pass from meditation to contemplation. And as all the operations that the soul can naturally do by itself, are done only by the intervention of the senses, from that comes that God in this state is the particular agent who pours out and teaches; and the soul is the one which receives, the one to whom God gives in contemplation very spiritual goods, which are knowledge and divine love together, which is to say a loving account, without the soul using its actions or discourse, for it can no longer enter there like before. (*Living Flame of Love Canticle* 3, Verse 3, Sections 4-5)

20. See Acts, Number 7.

21. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 30.

22. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 31.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

23. But tell me, Theotime, the soul collected in its God, why I beg of you would it worry? Does it not have reason to attain and remain in repose? For what would it look for? It found he whom it was looking for. What more remains for it except to say; [Canticle 3, Verse 4: I found my Beloved, I hold him and will not leave him.] It no longer needs to amuse itself in coursing with the understanding; for it sees its Husband present from such a gentle view, that speeches would be useless and super flows for it. If even it does not see him from the understanding, it is not concerned with that, contenting itself with feeling him near it, through the ease and the satisfaction that the will receives from it. The Mother of God, Our Lady and Mistress, being fat did not see her divine Child, but feeling him true God in her sacred womb, what content was she feeling from this? And St. Elizabeth, does she not admirably enjoy the fruits of the divine presence of the Savior without seeing him, on the day of Holy Visitation? The soul no longer has any need in this repose, of memory, for it has its lover present; It does not have need for imagination either; for what is needed to present in images, either exterior or interior, him whose presence one enjoys? So that finally it is the will alone, which attracts gently, and as in tenderly sucking the milk of this gentle presence, all the rest of the soul remaining in quietude with it, by the sweetness of the pleasure that it takes. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 9)

#### FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

24. See Confession Number 13.

25. Rusbroche distinguishes two kinds of prayers: one, where the contemplative is in holy leisure, and in perfect repose, the other where he is in the action. In the first, man knowing that all his action, as long as he is in his body, originally comes from phantoms and corporeal objects, and consequently that it is not possible that it unites him to God; he is carried above himself; all the virtues that he has acquired or infused; seem to him to be principles too love, to put him where he claims to go: He is elevated above operations of all his powers, and in this perfect nakedness of phantoms, images, virtues and operations, he is put in a state not in the least proportioned to the impression of God who works in his depths: and this is what is called sacred repose and a holy leisure. (*Mystic Conference* 19)

26. All my attraction and my interior instinct, if I have any, or (if I know how to know) if it, brings me sooner to see nothing and do nothing, and even to not watch, if I can or must do something else; but to walk like a blind man in this path of my simple occupation, through this unique glimpse into God. (Madame Rosset to St. Francis de Sales) (Conference 20)

### Section 3: Contemplation

#### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. It is a desire, which constantly, incessantly and without respite brings intellectual natures to the chaste contemplation not subject to trouble, things which are over being and nature; and this fondness that they have, for eternally participating in spirit and in truth in this pure and sovereign splendor, and in this invariable beauty which makes everything which partakes of it beautiful. (*On the Heavenly Hierarchy* Chapter 2)

2. See Naked Faith, Number 3.

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. How can he be in peace for a long time, who is embraced by useless and strange cares, who seeks subjects to occupy himself in the outside, and who is very rarely recollected in himself. Happy are the simple, because they will enjoy a great peace! Why are there found to be Saints so perfect and so exalted in Contemplation? It is because they made a point of mortifying in them entirely all the desires of the earth, and that in this way they put themselves in a state to be applied to themselves with liberty, and remaining united to God with all the fullness of their heart. (Book 1, Chapter 11, Sections 1-2)

4. Many would long to taste God in Contemplation; but they do not take care to do what they should to acquire such a great good. One of the principle obstacles to this so happy state is that one stops at what is exterior and which beats the senses, without being troubled to mortify the spirit and the heart. (Book 3, Chapter 31, Section 3)

#### HAPHIUS

5. See Naked Faith Number 7.

6. One must go forth from all simplicity through simple and naked contemplation of the Beloved. (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 2)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

7. The soul contemplating its God without veils or images sees him as if at high noon, resting in it just as in his own house, operating gently and familiarly in its heart, and seeing, tasting and experiencing as if he is closer to it than itself; may it be more [St. Augustine *Confessions* Book 3, Chapter 6 and St. Bonaventure *Soliloquies* Chapter 1] him than itself; and may it possess him not as something, or as itself, but more than all things and more than itself. In accordance with this light it behaves in such a way, that its joy, its life, its will, its love and its glances are more in him than in itself: and this all the more because it knows that it has experienced that he is gentler and sweeter than it; and finally that it sees him more beautiful and glorious than it: and even having perfectly known that he is everything, and that it is nothing, and that in him is all beauty, goodness and gentleness, in it all ugliness, spite, bitterness, it remains and lives uniquely in him and nothing in itself.

From which it follows [St. Bonaventure *Sting of Divine Love* Part 3, Chapter 1] that it is wholly in God, wholly to God, wholly for God, and wholly of God; but nothing in itself, nothing to itself, nothing for itself, nothing of itself: it lives wholly in the spirit, will, light and strength of God, and nothing in its own natural spirit, will, light, strength and capacity. In this capacity, in this spirit, and in this light it contemplates this essential will, namely the essence of God, as it is written; [Psalms 35:10 (or 36:9 KJV)] We will see the light in your light. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 6)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

8. St. Bernard: May my soul die, if it can be said, even from the death of Angels, so that losing the memory of present things, it is stripped not only of the desires and lusts for inferior and bodily things, but still more of their images and species, and may its conversation be pure with those ones, with whom there is likeness of purity: such transport it seems to me, is only or principally called Contemplation: For in living to not be stopped by the desires and lusts for things, this is a trait of human virtue; but by contemplating not being enveloped in the images or species of the bodies, it is a gift of angelic purity: the one and the other however come from the liberality of God; both are to be passed beyond and elevated above themselves: but one from a lot, and the other from a little. Blessed is he who can say: [Psalms 54:8 (or 55:7 KJV)] I would flee so far away, and I remained in the wilderness! (Sermon 25 on the Canticle) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

9. -- Did you pass above delights of the flesh, so as to no longer obey his concupiscence, or to be taken in by his allures; you have accomplished, and you surmounted yourself: but you have not yet stepped aside, if you have not achieved being freed by the purity of the spirit of the phantoms of bodily resemblances which overpower us on all sides. (Sermon 35 on the Canticle) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

10. St. Bonaventure: This revelation of eternal things is done, as Richard says, when the human spirit, gently touched by an interior inspiration, without the intervention of any visible thing, is raised to the knowledge of heavenly things. (Path 5 of Eternity 5 Dist. 4) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

11. --. The fourth degree of Contemplation according to Richard, is the one which is formed in reason and according to reason, which happens when drawing itself back from every function of the imagination, the spirit roams only in

other things which are unknown to the imagination. – This degree is more perfect than the previous ones, because it is more removed from corporeal and temporal things. From where it comes that Richard says, that in this contemplation the human spirit first makes use of pure intelligence; because all the functions of the imagination put aside and apart, our intelligence in this light first occupation of self and through self, is seen in general. (Path of Eternity 3 Dist. 4) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

12. If still by love and divinely infused illumination the jumble of fantasy is separated from the understanding, the understanding nevertheless always conceives of God in a finite and limited way. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 1) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

13. -- This taste serves to be brought above all perceptible things, all the intellectual occupations which are with the phantoms, to also pass the angelic comprehensions, in order to be able to say with the Wife; [Canticle 3, Verse 3] The guards found me. (Luminaries of the Church Sermon 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

14. Hugues of St. Victor: May the reasonable souls return to self and be recollected in self, so that without the images of the body, it can consider itself and the invisible nature of all powerful God; and may it reject the phantoms of terrestrial images, and everything which will be presented to its mind. For when the soul, by a pure intelligence, has begun to exceed itself, and enter wholly into this clarity of incorporeal light; during this time in this transport of spirit, this peace which surpasses every sense is found and obtained, so that there may be a silence in heaven for a half hour [By this half-hour silence (See Apocalypse {or Revelation} 8:1) he means, that I believe, according to experience, that one does not at all spend more than a half hour in a row, without some thoughts coming which only pass away: they never distract the will, because of the habit of emptiness and nakedness.], in such a way that the mind of the contemplative is troubled by the tumult or debate of turbulent thoughts: sensuality does not operate here, nor does the imagination; all the interior strength of the soul during this time is laid of his own function. (Book 2 of *The Soul* Chapter 20) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

15. Richard of St. Victor: What does the creative, moderating and restoring imagination of corporeal phantoms do here? May the formative imagination of so many fantasies draw itself back far from here, which every day goes about creating so many new shapes of corporeal things. -- This great multitude of images is useless of nothing here; on the contrary it harms a lot. (Book 3 of the *Contemplation* Chapter 1) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

16. Albert the Great: Happy is he who – through the introversion and the elevation of the spirit into God, finally forgets the phantoms! -- Therefore reject from your spirit all the phantoms, species, images and forms of all things, besides God, so that your exercise may be in the sole bare understanding, and in the fondness for God inside of you. (*Attachment to God* Chapter 4) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

17. St. Nilus: When you pray, do not imagine God in yourself, but without matter approach he who is without matter and you will understand. –

When the envious Devil cannot awaken the memory in prayer, then he does injury to the temperament of the body, so that he makes some unusual figure appear in order to represent God; that is why you remain on your guard, and in praying, protect your spirit from these acquirements. (*Prayer* Chapters 63-64) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

18. Taulere: See Operations of Self, Number 23.

19. Rusbroche: See Joy of the Soul, Numbers 15-16.

20. St. Teresa: May one understand this point well: for I would like to explain myself well. When God wants to suspend all the powers of the soul, as we have seen in the ways in the ways of prayer, that we reported it is obvious that even though we do not want it, this [That happens like Our Lord says to the Apostles, (John 16:7) If I do not go, the Comforter will not come.] presence of the Humanity of Our Lord is taken away from us. May it leave for them at the right time. Happy such loss which is to enjoy more what one seems to lose: for the soul then wholly employs itself in loving him, that the understanding endeavored to make it know, it loves what it could not understand and it enjoys what it could not have a perfect enjoyment of, if it had not lost itself in this way, so as to, as I say, earn more! (*Life* Chapter 22) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 4)

21. – Our Lord place in the most intimate parts of the soul what he wants it to understand, and presents it to the soul without images or form of words. May one carefully notice this fashion, which God makes use of in order to lead the soul to know what he wants, either from great truths or exalted mysteries, or something else --. And it seems to me that this is where the Devil can poke around the least and intervene. – This manner of sight or this language is so spiritual, that there is no sound or movement in the powers or in the senses, in my opinion, from which the Devil can draw anything. (*Life* Chapter 27) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

22. D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: Many esteem that this union can be prevented [My thought that I submit, or rather my experience is, that for a long time the memory or image of Jesus Christ, the thought of a mystery or an attribute alone recollect us, and immediately suspend all images and species, although one feels the love of Jesus Christ grow in self without images formed by him. The soul is then for a long time without the ability to have any occupation distinct from any image of Jesus Christ: But when the soul has arrived in the end, it finds Jesus Christ in God in an ineffable manner: the exterior images of the same Jesus Christ are then an infinite pleasure to it, and are of such exquisite taste without obstruction, clouds or hindrance, that this cannot be expressed: they communicate to the soul the substantial effect of what they represent: for example an image of the childhood of Jesus Christ, besides an exquisite taste, communicates to you an air of purity and innocence; that of the Cross, something destroyed, sorrowful without sorrow, and a taste without taste of the cross and of humiliation: in the way of the others. This state is extremely perfect and can be understood only through experience.] by every image, even useful in its nature, such as the images of the Humanity of Jesus Christ and divine attributes. One must nevertheless understand this is a sober and precaution manner, lest error slides in. For if you understand by this, that these images being presented to the understanding when it is already immediately in quietude, and it enjoys the pure divine union, they must not be so that they are retained, and during that time one must not stop at them, or at what they represent, but speaking rigorously the soul must truly close its eyes to such objects; one must inevitably avow that this is true: for to stop at these things, and to be distracted by them, is to be opposed to one's advancement in the immediate union with God. But if one means that these images, every time they are presented to the soul which contemplates purely, and which loves God, hinder, retard and weaken the vigor and the perfection of the union, I believe that is false; because we see by experience that it happens often, when man brings himself to God alone with all the affection of his soul, that during that time this image is suddenly presented to the soul: This God made himself man: and was crucified for me; and that these images not only do not hinder, but rather advance and augment the union of love and suspensive admiration: even the image of sins passing rapidly will do no damage [For it is God who places these things; but they pass and do not make a stop; this is what makes one feel an increase of peace, even savory, in Confession.], like thinking; This God with his clemency forgave me so many crimes (wrong doings): for this image is not used to troubling but rather of increasing the repose of the spirit, provided that men does not then descend to consider them in detail, but that immediately he returns to the spring of living water. (*Spiritual Summary* Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 3)

23. St. Thomas: Man in so far as contemplative, is something above man, because in the simple vision of the understanding, men is continued in superior substances which are called intelligence's, or even Angels. (Dist. 3 Question 35 I.A.2 in Quaestione) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 5)

24. -- One must in the soul, before coming to this uniformity, remove this second deformity, which is through the discourse of reason; and that itself happens depending on whether all the operations of the soul are reduced to a simple contemplation of intelligible truth: a convolution of these intellectual virtues is necessary, so that the discourse stopping, its gaze may be fixed in the contemplation of a simple truth. (2.2. q.180.Art.6ad2.) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 5)

25. -- St. Augustine calls contemplation a certain dwelling of serenity, and a wind or breath of eternity. (*On the Quantity of the Soul* Chapter 33) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 5)

26. D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: Prayer is a rising of the spirit into God: therefore perfect prayer will be a perfect rising. Now that one is done only by the vehemence of love and desire, even though he who prays [One can therefore desire without knowing that one desires: he asks without asking, which is to say, without knowing that he is asking; that is why he says, that he is not asking; it is with desire as it is with asking.] does not understand that he is then asking for something. From where it comes that St. Anthony said, that he who prays perfectly, does not understand that he is asking for something: for he who prays, makes no reflection on self, he does not compose and does not divide; but with a simple and pure act of love he grows drowsy with the prophet, saying [Psalms 4:9 (or 4:8 KJV)]; I will sleep and rest in peace in that. And that is the full peace, [Peace above all feeling. Philippians 4:7] and the height of the felicity of

this life which surpasses all the senses. (*Spiritual Summary* Part 2, Chapter 12) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 6)

27. -- Meditation seeks a certain truth, it works to good purpose: contemplation flies around without work, nevertheless to very great purpose; for it does not stop in inquiry, but in admiration. If meditation is done as it should be, it passes into contemplation; for after having done an exact search for the truth, the essences of things being denuded of all accidents and circumstances, by this assiduity, a certain habit is engendered, the light of intelligence is purified. (See Joy of the Soul Number 17) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 6)

28. St. Ambrose: May the desire for wisdom draw you and possess you like Mary, for this work is the greatest and most perfect; and may concern for the minister not turn you away from the knowledge of the heavenly word. Martha is not nevertheless taken up again in her good exercise; but Mary is preferred because she chose the best part for herself. (Book 7 on St. Luke) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 13, Section 3)

29. Taulere (speaking about contemplation): This surpasses by a lot most of the exterior institutions, and it is wholly a very holy occupation, instituted by the Holy Spirit itself. (Sermon of the 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Trinity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 13, Section 3)

30. Albert the Great: If you begin to denude and purify yourself of phantoms and images, and to simplify and tranquilize your heart and your spirit in God, so that you can and do feel the fruit of divine complacency in all your interior actions, and so that by good will you are united to God in spirit; that is enough for you as a good study and reading of holy Scripture. (*On Attachment to God* Chapter 5) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 13, Section 6)

## SECTION 45 LOSS. ABSORTION

Loss of operations in order to pass into God. Loss of distinction between God and the soul.

Before writing about Loss, it is necessary to explain, that even we speak about total loss in God, and stability in this loss, I do not claim that This is a cessation of being, or that it is absolutely impossible to depart from that. There is a kind of moral but not physical impotence: this impotence comes from the strong habit that the soul has acquired. A vase which has fallen in the sea is entirely lost with regard to us, even though it is not so in actuality, since it continues to exist in the same sea, and since one may find it again through some unforeseen accident, either in fishing, or through some indirect path: so although the vase is effectively lost, it is not so absolutely: however one does not fail to see it as such, because it is morally impossible to see it again.

I do not acknowledge a permanent state of passive light either; for that cannot be: although there is a certain permanence of death of spirit in order to no longer use one's own lights: and the habit of the nakedness and the emptiness makes the soul continually disposed to receive the light with mixing, because all the phantoms are evacuated and dissipated. Where I place the stability is in the will; which by dint of adapt itself to its divine Object and uniting itself to that, passes into him and flows out so much into the will of God, that the soul no longer perceives this will and counts it as lost. It is so, not only like the vase which has fallen into the sea; but like a river which after having flowed out into it is combined with it: for this water is yet more lost than the vase; nevertheless even though it is truly lost, combined and transformed into sea, it is not absolutely lost; since an Angel could separate these two waters. Yet the difficulty of the task makes it be seen as morally impossible.

### CANTICLE

The enjoyment of God is permanent and lasting; because it is inside of ourselves, and God being our final end, the soul can constantly flow out into him, as if into its term and center, and be mixed and transformed there, without ever coming out again: just as a river which is a water which has gone forth from the sea, and very distinct from the sea, finding itself outside its origin, tries through various stirrings to approach the sea again; until having finally fallen again into the sea, it is lost and combined with the sea, just as it was lost and mixed in there before going forth from the sea; and it can no longer be distinguished from it. –

It is like a drop of water, which loses its perceptible consistency when it is put in a vat of wine, where it is perceptibly changed into wine, although its being and its matter are always distinct from it, and that an Angel, if God wanted him to, could make the division. In the same way this soul can always be separated from God, though the task may be very difficult. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

True uprightness, which brings the soul to pass beyond all the pleasures of the earth, and all the sweets of Heaven, in order to lose itself in its God, is what makes pure and perfect love. (Chapter 1, Verse 3)

The soul wishes to lose itself in God with Jesus Christ his Son, to be hidden there, and to rest there forever. (Chapter 1, Verse 6)

Through recollection the soul lives and possesses itself; but through the departure from itself, it dies and loses itself. (Chapter 2, Verse 14)

You have hurt me, says the Husband, by the union of your hair. That marks clearly enough that all the affections of the Mistress have been reunited into God alone, and that she has lost all her wills in the will of her God.

In such a way that the surrender of herself to the will of God, through the loss of all self will, and the uprightness with which she applies herself to God, without making any more returns into herself, are the two arrows which injured the heart of her Husband. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

I raised the barrier, which was preventing my total loss, and the consummation of my marriage: for this divine marriage can be consummated only if the total loss has been achieved. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

As soon as the soul starts to flow out into its God like a river into its origin, it must be totally lost and swallowed up in him. Then it must lose even the perceived sight of God, and all distinct knowledge, however small it may be: [We see what is distinct from us; but not what is in us.] there is no longer any view or discernment where there is no longer any division or distinction, but instead a perfect mixing. –

By the consummation of the marriage it is flowed out into God, and finds itself lost in him, without being able to distinguish itself or locate itself. The true consummation of the marriage makes the mixing of the soul with its God so great and so intimate, that it can no longer distinguish or see itself. –

The consummation of the marriage comes about only when the soul is so melted, annihilated and disappropriate, that it can wholly without reserve flow out into its God. Then comes this admirable mixing of the creature with its Creator, who reduces them into unity, to speak thus, although with infinite disproportion, such as is that of a drop of



water with the sea, in that even though it has become sea, it is still always a small droplet, though in quality of water it is in proportion with the whole sea, and suitable to be mixed and to no longer make up but one sea with it. (Chapter 5, verse 4)

The Wife is the only one of her mother in that having lost all the multiplicity of her nature, she finds herself alone and separated from all, which is natural. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

Since, she says, the time when the ardent love of my Beloved devoured me entirely, I have been so extremely lost in him, that I can no longer find myself. (Chapter 7, Verse 10)

Everything, which is said about this ineffable union, is understood with all the essential differences between the Creator and the creature, although with a perfect unity of love and of mystic flowing out in God alone.

She no longer fears losing him, since she is not only united to, but changed into him. (Chapter 7, Verse 11)

O admirable advantage of the loss of created supports! One receives in exchange God alone as support. (Chapter 8, Verse 5)

If man had enough courage to abandon all he possessed, and all his self, so as to have this pure charity, which is acquired only by the loss of all the rest; one must not believe that after such a generous effort to acquire a good that he values more than all things, and which effectively is worth more than the whole Universe, he would come to scorn it, to the point of taking up again what he had left. (Chapter 8, Verse 7)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. See Naked Faith Number 3.

2. See Naked Faith Number 4.

### HENRY SUSO

3. See Annihilation Number 2.

4. See Annihilation Number 3.

5. See Annihilation Number 4.

6. See Annihilation Number 6.

7. Here the spirit losing itself, passes further through the circle of the eternal Divinity, and is raised to a rich perfection, which consists of no longer being weighed down with vices, it ascends by divine virtue into a luminous comprehension, where it receives a continual flowing out of the heavenly comforts. (*Dialog on the Truth* Chapter 21)

8. See Operations of God Number 4.

9. Here for the spirit there remains no more yearning for activity and effort; because the principle and the end have become one same thing, and the spirit by going forth from itself, has become one with God. (*Dialog on the Truth* Chapter 21)

### RUSBROCHE

10. There are three streams which comes forth from God as if from their source, the first one of which effaces (erases) the images and species of memory, the second by its splendor absorbs the lights of our understanding, and raises it above revelations and raptures, the third loses and consumes the will with its ardor. (Book 2 of the *Spiritual Wedding* Chapter 36)

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

11. Extend my heart, so that it may love you, and so that I may by an interior and spiritual taste learn how sweet it is to love you, and to swim and be happily lost in the ocean of your love. (Book 3, Chapter 5, Section 6)

12. See Property Number 6.

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

13. Faith seems to me completely loss and hope dead; because it seems to me that I hold and possess what I was hoping and believing. I no longer see any union. (See Transformation Number 8) (*Life* Chapter 22)

14. See Will of God Number 16.

15. Whoever does not lose his natural understanding, cannot have this supernatural light; because when our natural understanding looks for it, our imperfection accompanies it. God lets us look as much as we can, and finally he leads us to know our imperfection; which being known, God gives us this supernatural light, which flings the understanding to the ground; which understanding being beaten no longer seeks anything in itself; but it says to God: You are my intelligence, I will no longer know anything but what it please you that I know, and I will no longer trouble myself to look for anything; but I will remain in my peace with your intelligence, with which my spirit is occupied. (*Life* Chapter 31)

16. See Annihilation, Number 12.

17. See Operations of Self, Number 9.

18. See Operations of Self, Number 11.

19. By this gracious drop the soul remains plunged in this sweetness of love, it cannot and does not know how to operate anything: but it is lost in itself, and alienated from every creature, and remains content in the bottom of its heart. (*Dialog* Book 3, Chapter 3)

20. See Operations of Self, Number 12.

21. I no longer know where I am: I lost will, knowledge, memory, love, and all flavor. I cannot give any reason from myself: I remained lost, and I cannot see where I am: I cannot look for and even less finds anything. –

O if I could find the proper terms to express this sweet and divine friendship, and this lost union! I say lost with respect to man; for he has lost all the terms of love, union, annihilation, transformation, gentleness, sweetness, kindness, and finally all the words through which two such separated things can be understood and united: there remains only a naked and operative spirit without mixing, which cannot even be understood. (*Dialog* Book 3, Chapter 11)

#### ST. TERESA

22. I failed to put all my confidence in God, and in that I did not entirely lose the confidence that I had in me. I was seeking remedies and doing diligences: but I did not understand that all this comes too little, if we do not entirely lose the supports of our own confidence, in order to put it completely in God. (*Life* Chapter 8)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

23. When this purification comes to seize the soul more intimately, one must not be amazed, if it seems yet again to the soul, that it has lost all sorts of goods. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 10)

24. The reason why the soul not only walks securely when it is in this darkness, but also with more gain and profit, is because ordinarily, when the soul once again receives some improvement and it profits, this is through where it understands and thinks the least: on the contrary, through where it usually sees that it is lost. For never having experienced this newness which dazzles it, and makes it become lost in its first way of proceeding, it believes itself lost rather than profiting and in the right path, as it sees that it is lost concerning what it knew and tasted, and it is lead through where it does not know and does not taste: just like the traveler, who to go to strange and unknown lands, goes through new and unknown routes which he has no experience of, on the word of the others and not on what he knew about it; For it is obvious that he could never arrive at unknown lands except by new and unknown routes, and by leaving those that he knows. So does the soul in this fashion, when it profits more walk in darkness and without knowing. God then being master and guide for this blind man, for the soul, it certainly can rejoice and say; to darkness, but outside of danger, how that it knows him.

There is also another reason why the soul walks surely in this darkness, namely because it walks in suffering. For the path of suffering is more obscure and profitable, than that of enjoying and doing; as much because in suffering God adds strength to the soul, and to do and to enjoy the soul exercises its weakness and imperfections; as also because to suffer one exercises and acquires virtues, one purifies the soul, and one makes it wiser and shrewder. But there is

another principle reason, why the soul walking in darkness, goes about securely, which is on the part of the said light or dark wisdom: for this dark night of contemplation absorbs its and imbibes it in self and puts it so close to God in such a way, that he protects it and delivers it from everything which is not God. (*Dark Night* Book 2, Chapter 16)

25. See Purification Number 46.

26. Neither the world, the Devil, nor the flesh would dare attack it; in that the soul being free and purged of all these things, and united to God, not one of them can make it anxious. From this comes that already in this state, it enjoys a sweetness and ordinary tranquility; which it will almost never lose and never lack. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 16)

27. The soul in these absorptions of love loses the action and the memory of all the things, and this for two reasons: one, because as it actually remains absorbed and imbued with this beverage of love, it cannot actually be in another thing; the other, because this transformation into God conforms it in such a manner with his simplicity and purity, that it is left clean, pure, and empty of all the forms and figures that it had before. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 18)

28. The soul speaking to the people of the age, tells them, that if it is no longer found in such entertainments, that they believe that it has gone bankrupt and has been lost to all these things. – You will say that I truly lost myself. He who loves does not blush before the world for what he does for God, and does not hid his works by shame, even though all the world must condemn them: for he who is ashamed of confessing the Son of God before men, leaving the exercise of good works, the same Son of God, as he says in St. Luke [Luke 9:26], will be ashamed to confess him before his Father. And consequently the soul, with a spirit and courage from love, is prized and glorified sooner than one knows for the glory of its Beloved, that it does such a work for his love, namely, that it lost itself to all the things of the world. – Few spirituals reach this boldness and such perfect determination in works: for even though some practice this way of proceeding, and even though there are some which claim themselves to be extremely advanced, if ever they achieve losing themselves in certain points, either of the world, or of nature, in order to do perfect and pure works for Jesus Christ, without watching what is said or how it seems; and so those ones will not be able to say: You will say that I lost myself truly, since they are not lost to themselves in their works. They are still ashamed to confess Jesus Christ by their actions in front of men; they do not truly live in him, since they look at other things. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 21)

29. The truly loving man loses himself forthwith to everything, in order to find himself in what he loves: and for this reason the soul says here, that from it self is lost, which is to let itself be lost on purpose. And this happens in two ways: First, being lost to itself, not setting any store by itself in anything, but only by the friend; delivering itself to him for free without looking at any interest; losing itself willingly and not wanting to win in anything for itself, and secondly, being lost to all things, not taking into account any of his, but only of those which concern his Friend. And that is to lose oneself, which is to desire to be won.

[Justice of God Number 4] Such is he who is truly in love with God, who claims no profit or reward, but only to willingly [Willing loss. See the Explanation of the Book of Judges Chapter 5, Verse 15] lose everything and himself for the love of God, which he holds for his own gain. And he is thus in accordance with the word of St. Paul [Philippians 1:21]; I benefit by dying, which is to say, to die for Jesus Christ spiritually to all things and to oneself, that is my gain. That is why the soul says; I won myself. For he who does not know how to lose himself, does not win himself; on the contrary, he loses himself, depending on whether Our Lord says it in the Gospel: [Matthew 16:25] Whoever wants to save his soul, will lose it; and whoever wants to lose his soul for love of me, will save it. And if we want to understand the just mentioned verses more spiritually and more appropriately for what is dealt with here, one must know that in the spiritual life, when a soul has come to such a point so as to lose itself following all the means and natural paths of proceeding in the communication with God, and already it no longer looks for him through considerations, or through forms or feelings, or other means of the creatures and the senses, but it passes over all that, and over all these ways and manners, dealing with God and enjoying him in self and in love; then one says, that it has truly profited by God, because it truly lost itself to everything which is not God. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 21)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

30. Rusbroche: The fourth property, through which the simplicity of our spirit is possessed eternally by God, is its [This is reported to the presence of God in us. One thing of consequence is to be noticed, which is, that all the propositions are so mixed with each other, and so extremely dependent on each other, that the truth of the one is a consequence of the other: It is like a chaining up to each other. One must either completely deny the interior state, or admit all of them; because the ones are the beginning, the others the middle, and others the end and the achievement of the same state: some are like the principles; and the others like the consequence of the same principles.] essential

existence inside of us; which property also draws us inside: For it attracts us inside of ourselves and makes us be lost by ourselves in an unknown, infinite and abysmal obscurity, where we lose ourselves in a desert and very vast wilderness. Now by losing ourselves we find beatitude, and by finding we elect, and by electing we are elected; and between this electing and being elected is born innocence, which is the fourth property, in which all the virtues are begun and are consummated: For though innocence we are so plunged into our election, and so strongly in love in God, so clasped and embraced by him, that we cannot, and want not, and know not anything else, except to remain in him with this love during all the expanse of eternity, which makes us simple and free in all our essence and in all our acts. (*Tabernacle of the Alliance* Chapter 19) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 12, Section 3)

31. Dennis the Carthusian Monk: In this transformation of the spirit into God, the spirit flows out from self and lapses, and leaving itself with all the property of itself and of other things, it is plunged and thrust in, melted and liquefied, absorbed and engulfed in this sur ineffable, very simple and interminable abyss; and in order to understand everything together, it is annihilated and lost: but it lives in God; and being with him naked, pure and free of all property, mixing and affection, it is made one thing, one spirit, one soul, one being, one felicity; for it does not receive or admit anything. Because it passed into the deiform simplicity, the influence of God pulling it interiorly, and the contact sur-elevating it estranges the soul from self, and transports it as if into a new being: not that in all this the nature or the existence of the creature is changed or ceases to be, but because the way is exalted and the quality deified. (*On the Solitary Life* Book 2, Chapter 10) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

32. This word flowing out contains two things, namely death and life, or loss and gain; because in so far as the fervor flows outside of the soul, it grows drowsy and dies, fades away and is lost: but in so far as it flows out into God, it increases itself more, and lives more than ever. (*Rule of Perfection* Book 3, Chapter 5)

33. Sr. Francis of Sales: See Melting of the Soul, Number 5.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

34. See Operations of Self, Number 27.

35. See Abandon, Number 24.

36. As for the rest, all those who think themselves truly in their degree, are not so. It is a matter of death and dying; and many do not want to pass by there. They are full only of themselves, and of their reflections, justifications and own pursuits: They say that on no wants to or can even be faithful, thinking they had well covered their infidelity and not wanting by these means. So well that one must confess that there is nothing in those depths, since they do not want to go forth from themselves through the perceptible death and loss, in order to be able to be lost in God. If they had entered there through truth of death, they would never want to go forth from there by the least slackening of their active or passive faithfulness. Finally they will never pass beyond themselves; and lying in their natural sphere, they will remain famished hands at the mouth, empty of God, always languishing, and defective in their senses and active contentment: they will always be ignorant of what is the enjoyment of every infinite good which is in God. For this enjoyment is communicated only after the total transfusion of the creature into all God: then all the [There is no more vicissitudes in the depths which remain immobile in God above the feelings.] vicissitudes of human life remain on the outside; I say, in so far as opposed to human good-being, although they are very consistent with the divine good-being of the creature lost in all God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 13)

37. See Consistency Number 38.

38. Their life is wholly lost as for themselves, and so perfectly and so entirely to God in every event of death, as big as little, that they do not know if they are living to them or to God; which is a truth of infinite expanse. The reason for that is that love and humility takes away all reflection from them, always occupying them and losing them more and more in God, where they are and live without distinction or discernment of what they do or do not do, of what they are or are not. So they incessantly attend to the duty of reciprocal love, without believing or thinking that they satisfy. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 14)

39. One must desire nothing precious, beautiful, good, better, excellent, high or even holy, in a good sense: all that is only curiosity and wild game. One must be lost in truth, and attach oneself only to God alone, and not to any of his gifts, such as he may be, having a continual horror of self. For every appetite and every attachment to whatever it may be, even to penitence and to righteousness, affects the nature of itself, and brings it to be satisfied, and not to God, even though it seems the opposite to him. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 19)
40. See Abandon Number 26.
41. The soul is blessed with all the goods and riches of very noble spirits; in the whole of uncreated love, where being lost, it no longer reflects upon the human and base thing, not even upon the effects, which precede this one. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 22)
42. God is tasted and savored there in himself, in ineffable feelings and tastes of his own completely present eternity, which admits neither time nor exit. It is there that everything is melted and lost; and however everything, which remains of man to fill, remains fully and totally subject to the spirit, which secretly draws him to self, and lovingly operates on the outside according to the order and the demand of its duty. But, o good God, about whom and what are we speaking here? Seeing that one knows hardly anyone who by losing himself constantly, to let himself be polished and fashioned by the frequent touches of his divine Majesty. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 23)
43. The soul being entirely lost to its senses and their operations, remains very spirit according to its own substance, which being very penetrated by this fire of glory, [if I am permitted to call it thus,] no longer has any other life than the life of the same fire which devours it. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 3)
44. There is what our soul goes about following eternally; it is there that it is lost without resource, and never exits from, or can exit from. (*Mystic Cabinet* Chapter 4)
45. There are six degrees of enlightenment, through which one sovereignly becomes spirit by the entire loss and surrender of all self, according to the order of all these degrees. Very few people are found who want to give themselves as prey and in whole and perfect abandonment to the extreme: that is why one sees so few spirituals, in that they do not want to surpass the sense, or the excellence of the perceptible gifts of God in themselves; so well that it is only shams, only disorders of spirit, only every search and misery. The daughters [It is certain that men are much more upright than daughters, and that they look for themselves less.] usually have a good part in it, and many men also, who live nowhere else than in themselves, in perpetual reflections and pursuits, never having either peace or repose in their heart. (*Mirror of Conscience* Treatise 1, Number 39)
46. As for those for truly surrender themselves to God, they must be very watchful of the subtle attachments of nature; since that prevents them from flying purely in God, in which they must be irrecoverably lost, as if instead of this sovereign and objective center and repose. One must therefore be truly dead to all the perceptible, in order to feel simply and in accordance with the very simple depths. (*Mirrors of Conscience* Treatise 1, Number 40)
47. Now divine force must be great for the spirituals, who in whatever state that they can find themselves, never again want to know what it is to reflect upon themselves or upon the created things. It must also be great in those who always sur-passing themselves very strongly, are placed and established, not so much in their essential depths, but in God; in whom they are plunged and lost more and more, and remain there immobile fixed: where they are made and have become himself in his everything. [Communications Section 2, Number 11] It is from here that all the luster and all the good of these wives comes, in the conversation of those who are capable of knowing them, and of discerning them such as they are in their excellence. If some small lapses appear in them, that, though contrary to their depths, and these weaknesses are the reason from their sorrow, their renunciation, their death, their very profound humility. (*Mirror and Flames of Divine Love* Chapter 1)
48. Ah this so gentle life is unknown to men, to even those who exert themselves in great things, but only for their own life! For this life of self is in many people who exert themselves in exercises of charity, who are delighted to do good exterior works, in order to help their neighbor in his need: and even though the active life in its perfection is as spiritual as bodily, and does not fail to be agreeable to God, and profitable for those which practice; nevertheless those people swarm with attachments of the spirit to the deed itself of their own good, that they desire more or less with propriety, even though they may not know it. (*Mirror and Flames of Divine Love* Chapter 2)

49. No, no; I see, o my life, neither the past nor the future; being presently yourself, as I am, and have become in love with the love that you are in you and in me; completely lost in you from love into love, but possessed by love and possessing love, I am in you without knowledge and without learning, and I want none of it for me: through that itself that I am in that you are what you are, I am totally ignorant. (Soliloquy Number 3)

50. What means is there that those who are thus plunged and lost in these abysses, want to depart from it, and desire to return to created things? No, my dear Love that will not be. The mutual and reciprocal love of two such intimate Lovers, not only never allows it; but it infinitely abhors this return, it had gone from the life and from all the good being of your Wife. (Contemplation Number 17)

51. See Abandon Number 32.

52. Gain and abundance must yield to loss and surrender. But as you have not mystically entered into this desert, although it seems the contrary to you, you do not know what it is by experience. – As therefore you do not want to lose yourself, or employ yourself in a better pursuit, you remain in a greatly imperfect state, in comparison with the one of the entirely deified man. (Letter 63)

#### MONSIEUR OLIER

53. It seems to me that Our Lord desires so strongly, that our interior is lost in his, in order to be in him and with him everything, which he is to God that I cannot express. And even though since the time when he engaged me in the vow the host living to God its Father, he has obliged me to always live in this spirit, and to lose myself universally in his interior dispositions toward all things; I find myself now so effectively established in him by his love and his power, and so carried to live in him to God, in order to be, operate, and suffer in the manner which pleases him, that it seems to me that I cannot be otherwise in his good graces. (Letter 148)

54. As much as one leaves the earth and all ones feelings, as much as God takes pleasure in raising the soul to himself, and to put it in liberty, making it breath the serenity of faith, and showing it the beauty and the vast expanse of his perfections, where the soul must enter at the exit from itself and from everything which was supporting it while walking on earth. It has been a long time since I told you, and since God showed you the state [True spirit of the Church.] of pure souls in the Church, which to you appear elevated and separated from all humanity, which seem to live in the air, and to be sustained, surrounded and possessed only by the divine being. It is this state of faith which disengages and draws back the spirit from everything, which always goes about purifying and consuming in the virtue of charity everything in the soul which is not God, and which puts it in such righteousness, that God finds it in the state of being wholly engulfed in him. This divine Everything [Admirable] cannot endure anything in self which is not three times holy, which is to say perfectly purified of all feeling, either vicious, or natural, or even of that which is mixed with impurity in the divine. That is why after seeing separated from everything, which is crude, there still remains to abstain from searches for self in God, and from feelings, which accompany his first favors. For these searches and these feelings holding onto crude and sensory things, they clothe and surround the soul like a robe and a garment, which prevents it from being in its depths so intimately and purely united to God, which the sovereign perfection uniquely consists of. It is for this that Our Lord said: My Father is spirit, and he wants worshippers who are spirit in order to be united to him in truth. (Letter 155)

55. I always wish for you to be well strengthened in the virtue of the Holy Spirit: and I desire with all my heart to see you animated and clothed with a vigorous and powerful faith, with a living and ardent faith of charity, which directs you in everything. This is properly what you recently saw by special grace, when you with so much joy saw [O Lord, make many of them this way.] two souls living divinely in the Church. (Letter 155)

56. Happy is a soul which is intimately united to Jesus Christ, and which is converted into this Husband of the heart! Through him one is in God, and one is lost in the womb of the Father, where one is happily sunk in and engulfed. There one is in solitude, in purity, in holiness: there one cannot endure any creature, one is no longer thirsty for anything, and one no longer wants anything but this divine Everything: there one is satiated by this adorable Everything which fulfills [The desires are fulfilled, that is why one no longer desires.] every desire; one seeks to be in the Everything and to be there uniquely; and one avoids this unfortunate everything which empties us of God, and prevents us from possessing him peacefully. This truth shows and makes the soul interiorly feel the jealousy that it has to hold it to itself all alone, in order to not let it go forth from it, in order to prevent the soul from pouring out into other things, which would draw it outside of this interior solitude, where the soul must be occupied solely by it. When your soul is wholly in God, it will be necessary to speak to it in a way that Our Lord knows; but in waiting one must work toward our return into God, and toward our perfect consummation. (Letter 245)

FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

gives an account of

57. Sister Marie Rosette: See Non-Desire Number 47.

## SECTION 46 PRESENCE OF GOD

### SHORT METHOD

The great method to become perfect is to walk in the presence of God. He tells us so himself [Genesis 17:1]: Walk in my presence, and be perfect. Prayer alone can give you this presence, and give it to you continually. –

Nothing is easier than having God, and tasting him. He is more in us than we are ourselves. (Chapter 1, Numbers 3 & 5)

After having put oneself in the presence of God by an Act of living Faith, one must rend something substantial. –

The living Faith of God present in the bottom of our hearts must bring us to sink ourselves strongly into ourselves, recollecting all the senses on the inside, preventing them from spreading out on the outside: which is from the outset a great method to undo itself from a quantity of distractions, and to move itself away from the objects of the exterior, in order to near itself to God, who can be found only in the depths of ourselves, and in our center. – St. Augustine blames himself for the time that he lost, for not having first sought out God in this way. (Chapter 2, Number 2)

But as I said that the direct and principal exercise must be the sight of the presence of God; what one must do the most faithfully is to recall ones senses when they vanish.

This is a short and effective way of fighting the distractions: because those [This has been proven in Distractions.] who want to oppose themselves to it directly, irritate and increase them; whereas sinking oneself in by the sight of faith of the present God, and recollecting oneself simply, one fights them indirectly and without thinking of it; but in a very effective way. (Chapter 2, Number 4)

One must being with a profound act of adoration and annihilation before God; and there trying to close the eyes of the body, must open those of the soul: then must gather it on the inside, and being directly occupied with the presence of God through a living faith that God is in us – must hold them captive and subjugated the most that one can. (Chapter 3, Number 1)

If by performing its act of faith, the soul feels a little taste of the presence of God, may it remain there from that, without troubling itself for any reason, or passing beyond; and may it keep what is given to it as long as it lasts. If it goes away, may the soul excite its will with some tender affection. (Chapter 4, Number 2)

The soul through the method of recollection entirely is turned inside itself, in order to occupy itself with God who is present there.

If the soul turns all its vigor and its strength inside itself, it separates itself from the senses with this single action. (Chapter 10, Number 2)

Following only the interior attraction, and occupying itself with the presence of God, without in particular thinking of mortification, [This has been seen in Mortifications.] God makes it do many of all kinds. (Chapter 10, Number 3)

The faithful soul which, as has been said, exerts itself in the affection and in the love of its God, is completely amazed that it feels little by little that he takes hold of it entirely.

His presence becomes so easy for it, that it could not have it: it is given to it by habit. (Chapter 12, Number 1)

It is here that the presence of God during the day, which is the great fruit of prayer, or rather the continuation of prayer, begins to be infused and almost continual. The soul in its depths enjoys a priceless happiness. It finds that God is more in it than itself.

It has only one thing to do in order to find him, which is to thrust itself into itself. As soon as it closes its eyes, it finds itself taken and put in prayer.

It is amazed by such a great good; and there comes about on the inside of it a conversation that the exterior does not interrupt. (Chapter 13, Number 1)

The bed is the foundation of the soul. When God is there, and one knows how to remain nearby him, and be kept in his presence, this presence of God little by little melts and dissolves the hardness of this soul; and in being melted it gives off its scent. (Chapter 20, Number 2)

### CANTICLE

The sacred Husband is always in the center of the soul which is faithful to it: but he remains so hidden there, that the one which possesses this happiness, is almost always ignorant of it; except for certain moments, when it pleases him to make himself felt by the loving soul, which for them uncovers him in self in an intimate and profound way. (Chapter 1, Verse 11)

The soul seeing that the Husband does not accord it a grace, which it was expecting, after having accorded it to the soul in a time when it was not hoping for it, is amazed by this hard absence. It looks for him in its own depths, which is his little bed, and during the night of faith: but alas, it is indeed surprised to no longer find him there! It has some reason to look for him there; since it is there that he had uncovered himself to it, and that he had given it the most vivid feeling of what he is, that it has yet felt.



But o Mistress, you do not take care to find your Husband there! Do you not know, that he entreated you to no longer seek him in you, but in himself? It is no longer outside of him that you will find him. [In order to understand this well, it is necessary to explain in what way the departure from self comes about; because the people, who do not have experience with what is advanced here, could say, that since one must once stop seeking God in self in order to find him in himself, it is certainly more appropriate to look for him there all at once, than to begin to seek him in self, and since this is to lengthen the path, instead of shortening it, as I said elsewhere. But one would be very mistaken; because he who is not truly interior, seeking God in God himself, looks for him as something very distinct from self and as if on the outside; he even looks for him in heaven: that makes it so that instead of becoming interior and gathering, as David did [Psalms 58:10 (59:9 KJV)] all the forces of his soul, in order to apply himself to God, one dissipates these same forces: one sees us extremely small and dispersed lines gathered and strengthened by being gathered in the central point, and by a contrary effect weakened and dispersed all the more because they are more away from the center. It is the same way with the forces of the soul, either strength to know, or strength to love: the more collected it is in itself and in its center, the more strength and vigor it has to know and love. And as these same lines which are very divided become undivided in this central point; so are all the so diverse and distinct functions of the soul which are outside the center, being all gathered, no longer but a single point of undivided, though not indivisible unity. It is the same way with the soul; all its forces being in this unity, because they are assembled there, it has an admirable vigor for God. And it is of consequence to take this path; for the more the soul recollects itself and remains recollected, the more it approaches the unity; as one sees the lines little by little draw nearer to each other, and finally join together imperceptibly, the more do they approach their central point, and being all the more divided and separated because they are more removed from it. Assuming this I say that therefore in order to become interior and spiritual, one must begin to look for God in self through recollection, without which one does not come to the central unity. But when one has reached there, it is then that one must go forth from self, not in being multiplied on the outside and returning to where one came from; but in surpassing oneself, or passing beyond oneself in order to enter into God. For this departure from self, is not made through the same path through which one arrived at recollection; but like in crossing itself, to speak thus, passing beyond self, from the created center into the uncreated center which is God. Like a person who has arrived at a restricted place where he must inevitably arrive, would never turn back on his steps in order to depart from them, but passes beyond through the path that he finds open: in this way to depart from self is to pass beyond. And as if by arriving in the center, which is ourselves, we had to make all the more headway because we were more exteriorly dissipated and removed from the center: also the more one passes beyond oneself, the more removed one is from self from sight and from feelings; like he who having made much headway in order to arrive at an inn, then does many others beyond and is removed from it all the more because he walks more. As soon as we have arrived in our center, we find God, and we are invited, as I said, to go forth from ourselves by passing beyond ourselves; and then we pass into God very really: For it is then that he is truly found where we no longer are; the more we walk, the more we advance into God, and the more we are removed from ourselves. Then one must measure the advancement of the soul into God, on the distance it is from self, which is to say as for the sights, feelings, memory, self-interest, reflection. When the soul advances in order to arrive at its center, it is completely reflective upon itself; the more it approaches its center, the more it sees itself, though in a very multifarious way: but when it has arrived into its center, it ceases to see itself: as we see everything which is outside of us and do not see that which is in us. But the more it passes beyond itself, the less it sees itself; and by going outside of self, as it turns its back, to speak thus, it always sees itself less; because it is not turned in order to look at itself. This is what makes the self-reflections, so useful in the beginning, become so harmful to it in the following. In the beginnings reflective and multiplied views are necessary; next reflective, but simple and non-multiplied views are necessary; then a direct glance is given to the soul: like he who approaches the inn, no longer makes use of reflection, but watches the place which is within reach of his sight; then having entered within, he loses even this direct sight. The soul which has arrived in its center no longer sees itself, to speak thus; but it has a manner of feeling and perceiving, proper to this state: but when it has passed beyond itself, it no longer feels itself, no longer discerns itself: and the more it advances into God, the less it discerns itself, until finally it is totally engulfed in God and it feels, knows, discerns only God in him and for him. Then it is clear that all reflection is harmful and mortal; since it would be to put the soul in the path of leaving God, and returning toward itself. Now this passing beyond self comes about through the loss of the will, which like the sovereign of the powers drags the understanding and the memory along with self, which although very distinct and separated powers, are however one and indivisible in their center. Now I say, and it is clear, that this state carries a kind of stability with self; and the more it advances, the more stable it becomes. For it is obvious that the functions of he who passes beyond self and who leave himself, are entirely different from the functions of he who walks in order to arrive at himself and his center: and who would like to take up the first path again, would find the thing very difficult and almost impossible. Therefore he who has passed beyond himself, must always leave himself more; and he who wants to convert himself, must always approach himself closer to self: For to want to make a man who has already passed into God come back to the practices which he made use of in order to arrive there, is to want the food of he who has eaten (having passed into the intestines,) to come back through the mouth, which can happen only through an incurable colic and which gives death: whereas the food, which is still in the stomach can be vomited; also as long as we are still in us, we can more or less easily depart from it, depending on whether we are more or less advanced: but when we have passed beyond ourselves, (in the same way as the food which

as passed into the intestines,) the task is difficult and almost impossible, unless there is a general reversal through some mortal fall; like when the excrements come back through the mouth. It is therefore in this way that the stability and departure from self must be understood.] Go outside of yourself as fast as you can, in order to no longer be but in him; and it will be there that he will let himself be found. O admirable stratagem of the Husband! When he is more impassioned for his Beloved, it is then that he flees with more cruelty: but it is a loving cruelty, without which the soul would never depart from itself, and consequently would never lose itself in God. (Chapter 3, Verse 1)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. All things appertain it [this Cause first] and desire it, namely those which are gifted with reason and understanding through knowledge, those which are below feeling; the others by a movement of life, or even by a certain disposition, proper only to share in the simple being, accompanied by some habitual quality. ---
2. They praise it [Confused general indistinct presence of God.] without name, like when they say, that in a certain mystic vision, from the quality of the ones where it manifests in Divinity in some figures, it reproved and berated he who asked it: [Judges 13:17-18] What is your name? And as if it had wanted to turn him away from every conception and knowledge of the divine name, it says to him: Why do you ask me my Name which is admirable? For is not this name truly admirable, the one who is over every nameable name, and which is seated and [colloque] over every name which is named, either in this age, or in the future? (*Divine Names* Chapter 1)
3. The highest and most divine things, of those which can be understood by the understanding, are only certain reasons and notices of things, which are below he who surpasses everything, through which his presence, which is over every notion and thought, is demonstrated, which walks and passes over the highest tops of the very holy places. (*Mystic Theology* Chapter 1)

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

4. The Kingdom [Luke 17:21] of God is inside of you, says the Lord. – For [Romans 14:17] the kingdom of God is the peace and the joy in the Holy Spirit, which is not given to the impious.  
Jesus Christ will come to you, and will make you feel the gentleness of his comforts inside of you, if you prepare for him a dwelling worthy of him. All the glory and the beauty that this heavenly Husband loves, is [Psalms 44:14 (45:13 KJV)] inside the soul; and it is there that he takes his delights.  
When a man is truly interior, he is pleased to visit him often he converses gently with him, he loves to comfort him in all his pains, he fills him up with his peace, he treats him with an incomprehensible familiarity. (Book 2, Chapter 1, Section 1)
5. Everything becomes sweet, o my God, in your presence; everything is bitter in your absence: it is you who makes the heart tranquil. (Book 3, Chapter 34, Section 1)
6. Paradise is everywhere where you are, O my Lord, and hell everywhere where you are not. (Book 3, Chapter 59, Section 1)

### HARPHIUS

7. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 1.
8. See Naked Faith, Number 7.

### ST. TERESA

9. See Prayer, Section 2, Number 6.
10. See Prayer, Section 2, Number 8.
11. Since the soul is absent from his God, why would it want to live? It still feels a strange solitude, and such that none of the inhabitants of the earth can console it with their company. (*Chastisement of the Soul Dem. VI*, Chapter 11)

12. Every one of the three divine People are here communicated to the soul, speak to it, and make it understand these words of Our Lord in the Gospel (John 14:23), that he, his Father, and the Holy Spirit will come to make their dwelling in the souls that love him and keep his commandments. – The soul is more and more amazed each day, because it seems to it more and more that these divine people are not separated from it; but that it sees clearly, in the way that I said, that they are in the most interior part of the soul, like in a very deep chasm: For it feels this divine company in self, and cannot express in what way that is, because it has no letters. (Chastisement of the Soul Dem. VII, Chapter 1)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

13. Show yourself present to my eyes.

In order to declare this, one must know that there can be three manners of presence of God in the soul. The first is essential, and in this way not only is he in the good and holy souls, but even in the sinners and in all the other creatures, in that by this presence he gives them life and being, and if it failed they would all be annihilated. The second presence is by grace, through which God lives in the soul, which is agreeable to him, and with which he is satisfied; and this presence is not common to all the souls, in that the ones, which fall in mortal sin, are deprived of it, and the soul cannot naturally know if it has this happiness.

The third presence is by spiritual affection; because in several devoted souls are used to making some spiritual presences in many ways, with which he recreates them, delights them and gladdens them. But these spiritual presences as much as the others are covered and hidden, because God does not show himself in them like he is, in that the state of this life does not allow it, and in this way with each of them this verse can be understood; *Show yourself present to my eyes.*

In that it is certain that God is always present in the soul, at least according the first way, it does not say that he is made a present to it, but that this hidden presence that he makes in it, either spiritual, or natural, or affective, that he shows and uncovers it for the soul, so that it can see him in his divine being and in his beauty, in order that, as if by essential presence he gives the natural being to the soul, and that by his presence of grace he perfects it, that he also glorifies it by the manifestation of his glory. But as this soul is pushed by fondness and fervor for the love of God, we must understand that this presence from which it asks for the sight of its Beloved, is principally a certain affective presence, that the Friend did by itself to the soul, which has been so high, that it seemed to it, and that it felt itself have an immense, hidden and covered good, with which God communicated certain clear-somber-rays of his divine beauty to the soul, and with such an effect in the soul, that brings about ardent desires in it, and is enfeebled, for the love of what it feels hidden there in this divine presence, which is consistent with what David felt, saying: [Psalms 83:3 (84:2 KJV)] My soul desires and loses strength in the avenues of the Lord; because the soul grows weak with desire to engulf itself in this sovereign Good, that it feels present and covered; because even though it may be hidden, it very notably feels the good and the delight that there is there. And for this reason it is [See *Short Method* Chapter 21, Numbers 2-3] attracted and carried away or ravished by this good with more strength than any natural thing is from its center, and with this visceral appetite, the soul no longer being able to contain itself; it says; *Show yourself present to my eyes.*

The same happened to Moses on Mt. Sinai, because being there in the presence of God, he saw such sublime and profound performances and images of beauty and eminence, of the Divinity of God covered and hidden, than not being able to endure it, he prayed two times for God to reveal his glory to him, saying: [Exodus 33:13] If I found grace in your presence, show me your face, so that I may know you, and find grace before your eyes, which grace is to arrive at the perfect love of the glory of God: but Our Lord answered him: [Exodus 33:20] You will not be able to see my face: for man will not see me and live. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 11)

14. Within my womb you awaken where your abode is in secret.

The soul says that God dwells secretly in its womb, because, as we said it is in the depths of the substance of the soul and powers that this gentle embrace is made. Now one must know that God remains in every soul, hidden and covered in their substance; otherwise they could not subsist: but there is certainly diversity, or difference, concerning this habitation, in that he remains in the ones with contentment and to his liking, and in the others with disgust: In some he remains as if in his own home, commanding and ruling everything; in others he lives as if a stranger and in someone else's home, where he is not allowed to command or do anything. But where there are less appetites and less tastes is where he remains more alone, and as if in his own house, directing and ruling it; and he remains there all the more secret because he is more alone. And so in this soul where he no longer remains from appetite, or from forms of other images, or from forms of other created things, he lives there very secretly, with an interior all the more intimate and secret because the soul is more pure, more alone, more separated from every other thing, which is not God. Consequently he is secret, because the Devil cannot reach this place or this embrace; and no understanding can penetrate him as he is: but he is not secret to the soul which is in this perfection, (for it always feels him in self) if it is not according to these awakenings, because when he does them, it seems to the soul that he who was beforehand asleep in its womb, awakens; in that even though it did not feel him and did not taste him, it was nevertheless like the friend asleep in its womb.

O that this soul, which always feels God resting in its womb, is happy! O must it indeed withdraw itself from all things, must it flee affairs, and live with an immense tranquility, lest the least bit worry or trouble the womb of the Friend! --

In other souls which have not attained this union, even though he is not there against his wish, because they are not yet well disposed to that, he remains secret, because they do not usually feel him, except when he does some savory awakenings to them; even though they are not of the same kind as this one, and even though there is no comparison: but it is not as hidden from the Devil and the understanding as this other one, because he could certainly understand something by the movement of the senses, in that it is not well annihilated, until one has arrived at the union; for it still exerts some actions, to not be entirely spiritual. But in this awakening that the Husband does in this perfect soul, everything is perfect; for it is he who does everything, in the sense that has been told: and then in this excitation and awakening, like when someone is awoken and breaths, the soul feels the breathing of God. (*Living Flame of Love* Canticle 3, Verse 3)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

15. In love, says St. Thomas, is the union of the lover with the loved one; for because love transforms, it makes the lover enter into the intimate part of the loved one, and reciprocally the loved one in the lover, so that there remains nothing of the loved one which is not united to the lover. (3dist27qu.1)

Through where the real union is declared enough, to which union love tends by its nature: which is clearly signified in several passages of Scripture, such as the one in St. John [John 14:23]: if someone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and we will make our dwelling in him: where by these words, we will come, he promises his real presence, in accordance with the assertion of St. Paul; [Romans 5:5] The charity of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. – And in St. John it is said, that [I John 4:16] he who remains in charity, remains in God and God in him. And it is said about the just [I Corinthians 6:19] Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you. And about divine Wisdom [Wisdom 7:27] she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God. From all that, the Theologians infer, that when the sanctifying grace is given to the soul, through which God lives in it as if in his temple, not only does he communicate his gifts to it; but also (as St. Thomas says [IP.QU.43A3]) the Holy Spirit itself is given and sent, and lives in the soul. (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 1)

The same author gives an account of

16. Suarez: It seems to me that it is a probable and pious opinion, to say that the gifts of justifying grace are such, that they ask from themselves, or as if by innate (connatural) right, for the intimate, real and personal presence of God in the soul sanctified by these gifts, which is very well declared by these conditions, because, if against all possibility one feigned that the Holy Spirit was not actually present in the soul, nevertheless in that the soul would be redressed in such gifts, the same Holy Spirit would come to it through a personal presence, and would be there, and would remain there as long as grace remained in it; and for this reason, though from the other side it has this presence because of its immensity and its power with good reason, one says that it has it now by a special title, because of grace and charity; and consequently it is with reason that it is said that he comes, or that he is sent to the soul on condition of these gifts.

In the same way do we also understand the mission of the divine Word to humanity, to which it united itself: because even though one feigned that the Word by its immensity was not present to this humanity, nevertheless because it would be united to it hypostatically (The union of Christ's human and divine natures in one essence or person.), by virtue of this union and in order to terminate it, it should be intimately present to it; and consequently because of the union, it is now said to be really and intimately in this humanity in a special way. Then in this manner we say, that the Holy Spirit is given to the soul, and is in it intimately and really in a special way because of sanctifying grace; for by grace and charity a certain very perfect friendship is established between God and man: how the friendship requires and demands by itself a union between God and man: how the friendship requires and demands by itself a union between the friends, not only by conformity of affections, but also by an inseparable presence and conjunction. (On the Trinity Book 12, Chapter 5) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 1)

17. Father Ruis de Montoya: Because of supernatural friendship and the participation of Divine Nature, a stronger and denser good is added to the real presence of God in the soul: For after that the Holy Spirit comes yet again and really to the soul, and would yet again look for the real presence, even though against all possibility he was not present there beforehand in essence, presence and power. – Now in so far as by these acts and habits God contracts an intimate friendship with the soul, as if his daughter and his Wife, by a certain result of obligation, the real presence and the conjunction inevitably follow; and that does not follow in this way, from God bringing about the other effects. (Disp. 109 of the Trinity Section 3) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 1)

18. Cornelius to Lapide: All the Holy Trinity personally and substantially comes into the soul which is justified and adopted; which is proven by these words of St. Paul [I Corinthians 6:17] Whoever adheres to the Lord, becomes one same spirit with him; and by these words of Jesus Christ; [John 17:21] So that they may all be one, like you my Father are in me and me in you; may they be one in us. –

All the Deity and all the Trinity attached and enclosed itself in these its gifts, in order to unite us to self substantially, to sanctify, deify and adopt us. – From this communicated of the Person himself of the Holy Spirit, and from the Divinity, there follows in the soul a very great union with God, and like a deification, and consequently a very perfect adoption, namely not only by grace but by diving substance. (*Commentary on Hosea* Chapter 1, Verse 12) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 1)

19. It is an imperfection to cast a glance into God other than the simple remembrance of him, as if he were elsewhere and not in the soul, and the soul also in him, like the fish in the sea, and the bird in the air; with respect to which the glimpse of the soul must be like the patient, who remains in his nothing, which is to say that this glimpse of the soul must be drawn outside of itself by this divine beauty, and not sent by the soul. For just as the Sun which beats on a transparent body, like the water and the crystal, attracts on a reciprocal splendor towards itself; so does God casting the rays of his glance on the soul, attract onto himself a reciprocal glance. But as this reciprocal splendor of the water and the crystal does not come from them only or from their virtue; but principally from the Sun: so does this perfect glance not come principally from the soul, or by any act which is proper to it, but from God. And as this splendor is not the splendor of the water, but of the Sun, which penetrating and making the water clear returns toward the Sun: so the light of this glance does not come from the soul, but from God; who being spirit, life and clarity, this light penetrates and makes the soul clear, and so returns from there to God, and at the same time attracts the soul with him, which soul is in this way made one same thing with God. (*Rule of Perfection* Part 3, Chapter 10, Number 11)

#### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

20. It then happens sometimes, that Our Lord imperceptibly spreads out in the bottom of the heart a certain gentle sweetness which testifies to his presence; and then the powers, and even the exterior senses of the soul, by a certain secret contentment, is returned to the side of this intimate part, where the very lovable and very dear Husband is.

For just as a new swarm of bees when it wants to flee and change homes, is recalled by the sound that is made on tubs, or by the smell of honey sweetened with wine, or even by the scent of certain sweet smelling herbs, so that it is stopped by the bait of these sweets and enters into the hive that was prepared for it: in the same way Our Lord, pronouncing some secret word of his love, or diffusing the scent of the wine of his affection (love) sweeter than honey, or even evaporating the perfume of his clothes, which is to say, feelings of his heavenly comforts, in our hearts, and by this means making them feel his very kind presence, he again draws to self all the faculties of our soul, which faculties being gathered around him, and stopped in his as if in their very desirable object. And as whoever places a magnet among needles, would see that suddenly all their points would be turned from the side of their beloved magnet, and would come to be attached to him; so also [Recollection caused by the presence of God.] when Our Lord makes his very presence felt in the middle of our soul, do all our faculties turn their point to that side, in order to come to be joined to this incomparable gentleness.

O God, says the soul in imitation of St. Augustine, where did I go looking for you, very infinite Beauty? I looked for you outside, and you were in the middle of my heart. All the affections of Magdalene and all her thoughts were poured out around the sepulcher of her Savior, that she was looking for everywhere; and even though she had found him, and he spoke to her, she did not fail to leave them scattered, because she was not aware of his presence; but suddenly he called her by her name, and she came and gathered and attached herself to his feet: one single word puts her in meditation. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 7)

21. All these spirits active and plentiful in considerations, are ordinarily subject to being bothered in the holy prayer: for if God gives them the sacred repose of his presence, they leave it willingly, in order to see if they know how they behave there, and to examine if they indeed have contentment there, and if their tranquility is indeed tranquil, and their quietude indeed quiet; so instead of using their will to taste the divine presence, they use their understanding to discourse on the feelings they have; like a Wife who enjoys watching the ring, with which she will be married, without seeing the Husband which gave it to her. There is certainly some difference between occupying oneself in God, which gives us contentment, and enjoy oneself in the contentment that he gives us. (*On the Love of God* Book 6, Chapter 10)

22. This feeling of Heavenly Goodness, remaining a long time in a loving heart, is expanded and sunk in by an intimate penetration into the spirit, and more and more completely soaked by his flavor, which is nothing other than increasing the union; like is done by the precious ointment or the balm, which falling on cotton is mixed and united more and more, little by little, with the cotton, so much that finally one can no longer distinguish (by smell) if the cotton is perfumed, or if it is perfume; nor (by smell alone) if the perfume is cotton or the cotton perfume. O how happy is a soul, which in the tranquility of its heart lovingly preserves the sacred feeling of the presence of God! For its union with the divine goodness will grow perpetually, though imperceptibly, and will soak the whole spirit of this man with

his infinite sweetness. Now when I speak about the sacred feeling of the presence of God in this passage, I do not mean to speak of sensory feeling, but about the one which resides in the peak and the supreme point of the spirit, where divine reigns and performs its principal exercises. (*On the Love of God* Book 7, Chapter 1)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

23. It must be noted that the Wife is never without her Husband or without seeing him; in order to exercise her better, and accomplish purging her love, he withdraws from her, as for his inundating manifestation, which beforehand robbed all her sensory powers of her gentle and impetuous impulsion: so that lacking this good because of the retreat and absence of her Husband, (as it seems to her, if she is not well instructed in the loving exercise), her sorrows and languishings are renewed and felt worse than ever: so the Wife is in danger, if she does not remain stable and constant in her languishings, to wait in patience and the strength of spirit for the return of her Husband. But finally after having seen the arduous battles and the agonizing distress of his Wife from his absence, he returns more delicious and more luminous than ever. It is in this way that the objective Paradise is increased in the Wife, in proportion to the arduous and mortal absences on the part of her Husband that she endures. (*Mystic Cabinet* Part 1, Chapter 5)

MONSIEUR OLIER

24. O how happy are the souls, which are animated and possessed by holy love! Happily do they enjoy their dear Everything, which is always present to their heart, and which renews them when it pleases it, in the gentlest and sweetest ways of Heaven! How unhappy are the ones, which did not find this treasure of the holy and sur-heavenly love! (Letter 140)

SECTION 47  
VOCAL PRAYER. WAY OF SAYING VOCAL PRAYERS

SHORT METHOD

Let them say this Our Father, understanding a little of what they say, and thinking that God, who is inside of them, indeed wants to be their Father. In this state may they ask for their needs: and after having pronounced this word Father, may they remain in silence with much respect for some moments, waiting that this heavenly Father makes them know his will. – Next following the Father (Lord's Prayer) may they pray this King of glory to reign in them, surrendering themselves to him so that he may do it, and yielding to him the rights that they have over themselves.

Feeling an inclination to peace and silence, one must not pursue; but remain in this way as long as this state lasts: after which one will continue the second request. May your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Of which these humble supplicants will desire that God accomplishes all his will in them and through them; they will give God their heart and their freedom, so that he may dispose of them to his liking. Then seeing that the occupation of the will must be to love, they will to love, and will ask God for his love. But that will be done gently, peacefully; and in this way with the rest of the Our Father, which the Priests can teach them about.

They must not be overburdened with an excessive quantity of Our Fathers, and of Hail Mary, or other vocal prayers; one single Our Father said in the way that I just told, will be very fruitful. (Chapter 3, Number 2)

The way of reading in this degree is that as soon as one feels a small recollection, one must cease and remain in repose, reading little and not continuing, as soon as one feels attracted to the inside.

The soul is no sooner called to the interior silence, than it must not be overburdened with vocal prayers; but say little about it: and when it says them, if it finds some difficulty in that, let it feel attracted to the silence, remain there and make no effort, unless the prayers were done from obligation; in this case one must pursue them.

But if they are not so, may the soul leave them as soon as it feels itself attracted, and may it have pain to say them: may it not be hindered or bound, but let itself be led to the Spirit of God, and then it will satisfy all the devotions in a very eminent way. (Chapter 16)

CANTICLE

The praise of the single mouth is not praise, in the way that God says it through his Prophet: [Isaiah 29:13] This people honors me with its lips; but its heart is certainly distanced from me. Praise which comes purely from the bottom of the heart, being a mute praise, and all the more mute because it is more consummated, is not an entirely perfect praise: since man being composed of soul and body, both must be combined there. The perfection of the praise is, that the body has its own, which is in such a way, that far from interrupting the profound and always eloquent silence of the center of the soul, it rather increases it: and may the silence of the soul not hinder the word of the body, which knows how to give to its God a praise consistent with what he is. In such a way that the consummation of the prayer, in time and in eternity, is done in relation to this resurrection of the exterior word united to the interior one. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. The holy Book of Psalms – forms in those who recite it righteously, and with divine rapture, an extremely appropriate disposition, as much to confer, as to receive all the Sacraments of the Church. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy* Chapter 3)

ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

2. He who is in a Community cannot pull as much profit from the song of the Psalms as from prayer [This prayer is not a prayer done in running, but a prayer of interior application.]; because the jumbled sound of several voices puzzles and dissipates the attention and the intelligence. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 3, Article 91)

3. Those who pray to God in spirit, speak to him face to face in prayer, like the favored speak in the ear of the King. Those who pray from the mouth, are like those who throne themselves at the feet of the Prince in the presence of all his Council. And those who pray being engaged in the age are like the people, who present requests to the King in the middle of the rebellion of all the people. If you are learned in the divine art of prayer, you will not ignore what I say. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 27, Article 21)

4. During the night give a lot of time to prayer, and little to the song of Psalms. And when the day is come, prepare yourself with all your forces to once again fulfill all your duty. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* 27, Article 78)

5. May your prayers be simple, plain and without affectation; since the Publican and the prodigal child bend the justice and the mercy of God with a single word. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 28, Article 9)

6. Do not try for elegant words in your prayers; since it is often seen that children obtain from their Father in Heaven what they ask him for with simple and stuttering words. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 28, Article 13)

7. Do not make long discourses in speaking to God, lest this vain search for studied and useless words dissipates the attention of your spirit, which must be attached only to the sight of this great and divine Object. One single word from the Publican will attract the mercy of God to him: and one single word full of faith saved the Thief. Long discourse usually fill the spirit of him who prays with vain images, and confuse his attention, whereas few words are capable of recollecting it. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 28, Article 14)

8. When we have not yet received the grace of a wholly interior prayer wholly recollected in God, we resemble those who teach small children to walk. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 28, Article 20)

9. I prefer to say, the great Apostle states [I Corinthians 14:19], five words with a complete recollection of spirit, than to say ten thousand with the tongue. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven* Step 28, Article 25)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

10. The soul being in God, cannot also pray for anybody, if God does not push its spirit interiorly to do so. (In her *Life* Chapter 32)

#### ST. TERESA

11. I am speaking only about prayers that we are obliged to say, since we are Christians, namely the Our Father and the Hail Mary, so that it may not be said about us, that we speak without understanding what we are saying; if it is that one believed, that it is enough to pronounce the words only with the mouth, and that it suffices to go about in this way by routine. If that is sufficient, or not, I do not interfere to decide that question: the Scholars will resolve it. What I desire is that we are not contented with such a process. For when I say the Credo, it seems to me that it is right that I understand and know what I believe; and when I say the Our Father, love requires that I know who is this Father, and who is this Master who taught us this prayer. – May his divine Majesty never permit, that reciting this prayer, we do not remember very often such a Master such as is he who taught it to us with as much love, and with as much desire that it benefited us with. –

So I desire that you know that in order to recite the Our Father well, you must not keep yourself away from the Master who taught it to you. You will tell me that this is a consideration, and that you can and want to pray only vocally: because there are impatient people who desire to be exempt from pain, which people have difficulty in recollecting their spirit in the beginning, because they are not accustomed to it; and in order to not bear a little work, they say that they cannot do more, and that they know only how to pray vocally. You are right to say that it is already mental prayer: but I tell you certainly, that I do not know how you can separate him by praying vocally, if you think about whom you are speaking: And there is even an obligation to prayer with attention; and God wants that with all these remedies the Our Father (Pater) be well said, and that we achieve it without our spirit letting itself go off to some other extravagant thought. I find that the best is to always have one's mind on him to whom I address my words. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 24)

12. So that you do not think that one draws little profit from vocal prayer done with perfection, I say that it can certainly come about that [This relates to what is said for those who do not know how to read. *Short Method* Chapter 3, Number 2] reciting the Our Father, vocally, or saying some other vocal prayer, Our Lord puts you in perfect contemplation. For by this path he makes us know that he is listening to him who speaks, and lowers his greatness down to condescending to speak to him also, by suspending his understanding, binding thought to him, and as one says, taking away the word from his mouth, so that even though he wants to speak he cannot do so, except with great difficulty. He sees that this heavenly Master teaches him without the sound of words, suspending his powers, because if they operated them, they would be more harmful than helpful; they enjoy, but without knowing how: the soul is



embraced by love, and it does not understand how it loves: it knows that it enjoys what it loves, and it does not know how it enjoys that; it sees well while it is not enjoyment that the efforts of the understanding arrive at: the will embraces it without penetrating its manner.

To think about what we say and understand whom we speak with, and who we are, -- that is mental prayer. Do not think that this is some other unknown language, and may the name not frighten you. To recite the Pater (Our Father) and the Ave Maria (Hail Mary) or whatever other pray you want, is vocal prayer: consider them how bad this music will be without this first movement; and even the words will sometimes be without order and agreement. (*Way of Perfection* Chapter 25)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

13. Please notice, that the soul in this verse does nothing other than [This is properly the prayer of simple exposition, or what is called prayer of simplicity.] presenting its necessity and pain to its Friend; because he who loves discretely, does not trouble himself about asking for what he lacks, and what he desires, but only to present his necessity, so that the Friend may do what he finds to be good; like when the Virgin said to Our Lord at the wedding of Cana: [John 2:3] They have no wine: and the sisters of Lazarus sent him the message, [John 11:3] not that he return health to their brother, but that he whom he loved was sick: And this for three reasons; the first because Our Lord knows better than we do what is right for us; the second, because the Friend has more compassion, seeing the necessity of him whom he loves and his resignation; the third, because the soul is more covered in self love and property, in presenting what it lacks, than in asking for what it seems to have need of. Here the soul does the same, presenting its three necessities; and this is as if it said; Tell my Beloved, that since I am sick, and since he alone is my recovery (cure) may he give me my health; and since I am in pain, and since he alone is my repose, may he make me enjoy my good and my quietude; and since I am dying, and he alone is my life, may he give me life. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband* Couplet 2)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

14. This lovable daughter (See Abandon Number 22) did not look at her pricked arm, or the blood which came forth from her vein; but keeping her eyes fixed on the face of her father, she said nothing except sometimes gently: My father loves me much; and me I am completely his: and when all was done, she did not thank him, but only repeated one more time the same words of her affection and filial confidence.

[Pure Love Number 37] Tell me now, my friend, Theotime, does not this daughter testify to a love more affective and solid toward her father than if she had much concern to ask him the cures for her sickness, to watch how he opened her vein, or how the blood was flowing, and to tell him many words of thanks? There is certainly no doubt in that: For if she had thought to herself that what would she have gained, except useless concerns since her father had enough for both of them? Concerning her arm what would she have done, except be frightened? And thanking her father, what virtue would she have practiced, except that of gratitude? Did she not do better to occupy herself completely with demonstrations of her filial love, infinitely more agreeable to the father than any other virtue? (*On the Love of God* Book 9, Chapter 15)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

15. If sometimes you find yourself occupied with the species of someone who presents himself to you, know that is ordered by the Husband for the need that this person has of your help. That is why you will present him to his divine Majesty with a simple and loving glance, without thinking about it anymore. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order* Chapter 18)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

16. This kind of prayer, in the way that it is described, sometimes has so much attraction for some souls, that they seem to lose [Devotion to the Saints which appears lost.] devotion to the Saints, to vocal prayers, and stop asking God what is necessary to the Church and particular people. I respond, that it is quite the contrary; and that one esteems all these things more, as means by which one has arrived at what one enjoys: and that as some are more suitable to vocal prayer than to interior exercises, they are advised to make use of them; to others who on the contrary have more attraction to the interior, to do less vocal prayers, which is like a means to light up interior devotion. St. Thomas says, [2.2QU.83] that when vocal prayer is not of precept, it must cease when the spirit feels itself inflamed; because having attained one's end, it is good to enjoy it, without stopping to much as the means. It is carried into the life of St. Ignace [Book 2, Chapter 1], that he could not advance to say his Office, because of the great communication that he had with Our Lord, and that his companions asked for him from the Pope the permission to leave it, in that he was occupying it the whole day, being almost stopped at each word in order to receive the visit of God: For being obliged to say it, he had to quit it.

I say moreover that in this kind of prayer one does not leave the requests: that on the contrary by a secret means, one asks better without saying anything, in order to occupy oneself more with what for then pleases God more; and one obtains it sooner, because one wins better the will of the Lord, who must give it: who knowing all our needs, and knowing the intention and the desires of his servants, who fail to ask, in order to occupy themselves entirely in doing his will, confiding themselves in his gentle providence; he does not fail to give to them and content them, like a thing with

which he is entrusted. He says through his Prophet [Psalms 144:18 (or 145:18 KJV)] that he will do the will of those who fear him; and this same Prophet [Psalms 36:4 (or 37:4 KJV)] gives as a means to obtain all the desires of the heart, to rejoice in the Lord. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 5, Section 7)

17. It seems that this kind of prayer hinders the common institution of praying that St. Ignace has taught, and which is usually recommended by the Doctors.

I answer that on the contrary it favors it: for when Our Lord does not forestall a special inspiration, one must begin with that; it is from it that this other form of prayer proceeds; since by the means of meditation, the soul reaches the quietude of contemplation, and the Author of the exercises by a special grace climbed from one to the other, it being said about him that he carried himself to prayer more passively, enjoying what he was given; than actively, working with discourse: because he was already resting like he who had arrived at the end of the path. And although the common way of praying must usually be proposed to all, if however Our Lord in the beginning admits someone to the prayer of quietude, he must be helped there. It can also be recommended for those who have for some years exerted themselves in meditations, and who are already quite advanced, and disposed to this manner of praying with interior quietude, in the presence of God; counseling them. [Like the *Short Method* does see (Chapter 3, Numbers 2-4), (Chapter 21, Number 6), (Chapter 24, Number 8)] to not stop acts all of a sudden, but little by little: And that brings about no division in the Communities, in that the form of prayer by affections with little discourse, is common to many, and it is what is more perfect, and also more rare in prayer; For perfection is found only in very few. Pleased be God if there were more! They would wake up the tepid (lukewarm) people: and it is not bad to thus walk in a particular path; for God does not give singular favors to those who content themselves with walking in the large common path.

Finally one can object, that those who go in this path, are susceptible to pride, property and other faults; and that they forget the necessary things.

I answer, that all the faults, that one will see in those who make use of this prayer, do not come from its practice; but rather from one not practicing it well, and from the weakness, from the indisposition and from the imperfection of the subject, that one must correct and amend. The same faults, and often greater ones, happen to those who make use of speech; because vanity is more mixed in the things which are advantageous on the part of the understanding: and then a thing is not bad, though one can make bad use of it. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 5, Section 7)

#### FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS, ABBOT OF ESTIVAL

18. Sister Marie Rosette, who had the happiness of the guidance of St. Francis de Sales, and then of the Reverend Mother de Chantal, said these words about this article of vocal prayer; Our very worthy Mother de Chantal in the past has told me, to pray to God at the end of prayer, and after Communion, for everyone, for our institution, and for charity; this is to say that I regard God with this affection of wanting to pray for that; and that I say a Pater (Our Father) and an Ave (Hail Mary) with this intention, and that I also say it in the morning during my exercise: so that this alone is what I try to do to be obedient; For I do it in pulling me from my attraction, not having any ease to follow my advice; but I never dared get rid of it.

The soul can therefore pull itself from its attraction when there is some obligation of obedience: but if the soul, as soon as it thinks about praying to God for someone, at this name of God is attracted and engulfed in the simple glance, what is there to do? Like we read about Brother Giles lay monk of the Order of St. Francis, who at the single word of God, or of Paradise, was carried away. Sister Mary of the Incarnation could not perform any vocal prayer, not even to say an Ave (Hail Mary) without great pain; and if she began her rosary with her daughter, after the first Ave (Hail Mary) she was no longer of herself, because of the interior recollection which seized her, and which prevented her from continuing. – Her Confessors had trouble to give her penances in her confession, some of them knowing how arduous vocal prayer was to her, enjoined her only with these two words, Jesus, Mary, or some alms. This is one of the causes, which turned her away from taking orders because of the vocal prayers to which the Sisters are obliged. (*Mystic Conference* 8)

19. Sister Anne Marie Rosset of the Visitation says, that St. Francis de Sales had assured her, that this presence of God includes everything: and that about her not thinking about the great mysteries that the Church represents in the various feast days of the year, he told her to perform only some scattered prayers vocally throughout the day on those days, on the subject of these mysteries; and he ordered her to perform an act of adoration (worship) and an act of humility before the very hold Sacrament once a week. She believes that he ordered her to do that, for her being able to tell him that she did not know who to worship Our Lord in this Sacrament, or perform acts of humility having no feeling of her misery and her nothingness. (Circulating Letter on his death)

[I am not speaking about the passive state: everything I said assumes it.]

## SECTION 48

### PROPERTY (PROPERTY, OWNERSHIP)

It is necessary to see what Property is before speaking about Purification, that being necessary in order to be better understood.

#### SHORT METHOD

Everything which is from efforts of self and from property [To understand this, it is necessary to know that there is a property which is mortal or of pure spite, and which is a mortal sin. There is a spiritual property, all the more dangerous because it is delicate. There is the natural property: I call natural property, that which is without the will, even though it may be in the will. It is a certain natural repugnance to its own destruction: it is a certain quality fixed in itself, hard, stopped, narrowed, which keeping the soul in self, prevents it from flowing out, and losing itself in God; which has been seen. When it is without the will, God destroys it in the terrible purgatories (which we will speak about) either in this life, or in the other. When the will joins itself to this natural resistance in order to not let itself be destroyed, then God does not do his work in the soul; and an infinite amount of trials and graces sent for that, seeing its resistance, which is not always positive, for it is most often indirect, he with regrets holds back from purifying it in the other life, because he does violate our freedom.] must be destroyed: because nothing is opposed to God but property and all of the allegiance is in the property, like in the source of its malice: so that the more a soul loses its property, the more pure it becomes: and which would be a fault for a soul living to itself, is no longer so, (because of the purity and the innocence that it has contracted) as soon as it lost the properties [For one must notice that property makes life, and disappropriation (taking away property) death. It is a (enchainure) of states, from which one must pull a reciprocal result; because although they are detached and multiplied in expressions, they make one in the soul, because they always make its own state of unity by their union or by their contradiction.

In order to explain this, one must know that there are ways of impurities, which contract after the union, both superficial, the one nevertheless real and the other apparent. The real one is when the outside is not yet transformed like the inside, certain first movements or feelings, when a strong contradiction presses us, some vivacity or promptness escapes to the outside, even though the inside is not in the least altered.

There are some apparent and not real faults, which comes only from freedom, innocence and simplicity: without either pain or scruple one does innocent things, which one would have scruples about at other times, when the necessity to purify the senses kept them in extreme restraints. For example, to recreate oneself with a flower, a bird; to no longer obstruct the view because the objects no longer make any impressions, though it was extremely restrained in the beginning; to enjoy oneself with children; to eat of everything indifferently, because one has no taste for anything. At other times one would have done all these things scrupulously. Uneasy people are often shocked by this innocent freedom.] which caused the dissimilarity between God and the soul. (Chapter 24, Number 1)

So that man may be united to God, his Wisdom, accompanied by divine Justice, like a ruthless and devouring fire, must remove from the soul everything that it has of property, of world, carnal or self activity: and that having removed all that from the soul, he unites himself to him. Which is never done by the industry of the creature: on the contrary the creature regretfully endures it. [One must pay attention to that I said that there are two properties and two resistances, the one voluntary; and the other purely natural.] The resistance which is in question here, is in nature, and not at all voluntary; on the contrary the will is subjugated to God despite the resistance of nature: that is why God having the consent of man, enclosed in his entire and general surrender to all the wishes of God, he makes use of his authority despite the revolts and resistance of the nature. But if the resistance were voluntary, however small it was, it would stop the operation of God. One must also notice that I said and proved above (See the article on Free-will.) that God accepts the free will when it is given to him sincerely, and that then he makes use of his rights. It is still necessary to understand that under the name of property are included the operations of self, self love, self pursuit, everything which is related to us, as well as all the space between God and the soul, all the resistance, even all the repugnancies, all relation to self, spiritual and temporal: self love is in all that and property; because, as I said, man loves his property so strongly, and so much does he fear his destruction, that if God did not do it himself and with authority, man would never consent to it.

To that I will be answered, that God never takes away man's liberty, and that so he can always resist God: from which it follows, that I must not say, that God acts absolutely and without the consent of man. I explain myself, and I say, that it then suffices for him to give passive consent, so that he may have entire and full freedom; because having given himself to God since the beginning of his path, so that he made in him and from him everything he would want, starting then he gave an active and general consent to everything which God might do. But when God destroys; burns and purifies, the soul does not see that this is advantageous to it: it rather believe the contrary. (Chapter 24, Numbers 6-7)

## CANTICLE

The departure from oneself, by the continual renouncement of all self interest, is the interior exercise, which the heavenly Lover advises to the souls, which sighed after the kiss on the mouth, as he means for it to be understood by his Mistress with this single word, come forth, which suffices for it in order to rule her interior. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

The Husband by these words gives one to know the advancement of his Mistress, who is like a very pure, very pleasant lily with a beautiful scent before him; when the other daughters, instead of being supple and pliable, are like bushes with thorns, which bristle and prick those who want to approach it. Such are the proprietary souls attached to their own will, which do not want to be led to God. And it is to what a soul well surrendered to its God endures with those, which are not, so: For the others do all that they can, to pull it back from its path. But just as the lily preserves its purity and its scent among thorns, without being damaged in the least; so are these souls preserved by their Husband among annoyances, that they must endure from those who love only to direct themselves, and to be multiplied in their own practices, not having the docility to follow the movement of grace. (Chapter 2, Verse 2)

What is this order, [these rules] that God places in charity? O Love, God-charity, you alone can reveal it! It is that he makes it so that this soul, which by a movement of charity, wanted for itself all the good possible in relation to God, [Self love is the son of property, and pure love is born in the soul only by its entire disappropriation.] neglecting itself entirely, in order to no longer think but of its Beloved. It neglects all interest in salvation, perfection, joy, comfort; in order to think only about the interest of its God. It no longer thinks about enjoying his embraces; but about suffering for him. It asks for nothing more for itself; but only that God may be glorified. It enters into the interest of divine Justice, with all its heart consenting to everything that it will do of itself and in itself, either for the time, or for eternity. (Chapter 2, Verse 4)

This mist is composed of the most select scents of all the virtues. But one must notice that the scents, of which this mist is composed, are gums suitable for being melted, and powders which do not make solid bodies: the solidity and the consistency in itself are no longer of its state. And from where this so straight and such sweet smelling mist climbs? It climbs from the desert of faith. And where does it go? It wants to go rest in its God. (Chapter 3, Verse 6)

Our Mistress already feeling very much disengaged from herself believes that there is no longer but a single thing to do; and it is true: but alas! There are obstacles to overcome before succeeding in that! That is to go into God, who is the bed of repose of the true Solomon. But in order to arrive there, one must pass before sixty of the strongest men of Israel. These valiant warriors are the divine Attributes, which surround this royal bed; and which prevent the access for those who are not completely annihilated. They are the most valiant of Israel, because it is in these Attributes, that Israel, which designates the Contemplative, finds its strength, and that it is also through them that the strength of God is revealed to men. (Chapter 3, Verse 7)

All are armed with their swords, to fight with strength against this soul, which by a secret presumption [In so far as the soul attributes strength and justice to itself, this is a property which it must be purified of, such as will be seen in the article on Purification.] to attribute to itself that which belongs only to God: this is what makes the same with one voice; who [Words attributed to St. Michael.] is like God? The divine Justice is the first which comes to fight and destroy [All these things, in so far as appropriate to man, must be destroyed, so that he may enter into true justice and holiness, which is God's. This is all performed in the purification that the Blessed John of the Cross calls Night of the spirit.] the justice of the creature: and the Strength comes next to lay low man's strength; and by the experience of his extreme weakness making him enter [Psalms 70:16 (or 71:16 KJV)] into the power of the Lord, it teaches him to remember only the sole justice of God. Providence declares itself against human providence; and so with all the Attributes. They are all armed; because the soul must be destroyed in all these things, in order to be admitted into the bed of the true Solomon to be his Wife, and so that the marriage is accomplished and consumed. These valiant warriors always have their sword at their side. This sword is nothing but the most intimate and most penetrating word of God; but effective word, which is uncovering the most secret presumption of itself to the soul, extracts it from it at the same time.

This word is the uncreated Word, which manifests itself in the depths of the soul, only in order to perform there what it expresses there. It does not declare itself, rather than like a clap of thunder it reduces that which is opposed to its passage into powder. This divine Word by becoming incarnate makes use of it just the same: [Psalms 32:9 (or 33:9 KJV)] It (the Word) spoke, and it was done, and it imprinted the characters of its Omnipotence in its Humanity. It came into the baseness of the creature, to destroy its exaltation; and in its weakness, to beat down the strength: and it took the shape of the sinner, in order to bring down his own justice; it humbles him, weakens him, and covers him in miseries.

But why does Scripture say that they are all armed in this way, because of the fears of the night? That means, that like the [There is such a relation between purification and property that one has trouble in detaching them; Property between the matter of purification.] property is that which keeps the soul in the darkness, and which causes it all its gloomy nights; the divine Attributes are thus armed against it, so that it does not usurp what belongs only to God. (Chapter 3, Verse 8)

Although the Husband cannot yet admit the Mistress into his nuptial bed, which is the womb of his Father; he does not fail however to find her very beautiful, the more beautiful than ever: for her faults are no longer notable sins, or almost offenses; but shortcomings which are in her nature, still hard and narrow, which has unbelievable pain in

being extended in order to lose herself in God. She is therefore very beautiful both in the interior and on the exterior. (Chapter 4, Verse 1)

Until the soul was completely melted in bitterness and crosses, even though it was beautiful, she was nevertheless not completely beautiful: but since the time when it was melted under the weight of crossings and afflictions, it has become beautiful, and in it there is no stain or deformity.

By this it would be disposed to the permanent union, if the still hard, narrow, bounded and limited quality did not prevent this happiness. This quality is not a stain in it [That is to say, which is in its will, or rather which is voluntary.], or anything, which offends God: it is only a shortcoming of its nature taken in Adam that its Husband will destroy imperceptibly. But for it, since the cross entirely disfigured it in the eyes of men, it is completely beautiful in the eyes of its Husband; since it no longer has beauty, it has found true beauty. (Chapter 4, Verse 7)

The soul which watches over its God, feels that although its exterior appears dead, and disconcerted and deadened, like a sleeping body; nevertheless his heart always has a secret and unknown vigor [One must notice that this soul always tends to God, or is united to him with a tie of unity: so it is well removed from remaining idle. I am reporting all these verses in order to enlighten them all.] which keeps him united to God. Moreover, the extremely advanced souls often feel a surprising thing, which is, that they only have a night of half slumber, and that God operates more in them during the night and sleep, it seems, than during the day.

The soul during this sleep certainly hears the voice of its Beloved, who comes to knock at the door. He wants to make himself heard: he says to it: Open us, my Sister; I am coming to you, my Beloved that I chose over all others to make my Wife. Consider that my head is full, and still disgusting from what I suffered for you during the night of my mortal life, and that I endured for your love the drops of the night of the most cruel persecution. I then come to you in this way, in order to make you a part [One must notice that crosses, ignominies and embarrassments are always spoken about. There are certainly some people who deliver themselves for certain crosses and not for all of them; who never want to lose their reputation before men, and this is what God wants to make them lose here. As God wants to make this soul go forth from itself, in order to apply it on the outside, it feels an extreme repugnance in that, loving only its retreat. Nevertheless it is very certain, that if one never came forth from solitude, these sorts of crosses would not happen. When God wants to make one die, he sometimes allows certain apparent imprudences, which are not so in effect, which seems to give place to that. I knew a person who in one view, which had given her terrible crosses and especially a loss of reputation, to which she was very strongly attached, could never resolve herself to it, and said to God: Rather all other crosses; formally refusing her consent to this: she remained there without passing beyond: this reserve was so disagreeable to Our Lord, that he has never since favored her with any humiliation or any grace. It is she who told this story to me.] of my disgraces, my ignominies and my embarrassments. Up to the present you took part in the bitterness of my cross; but you have had no part in the ignominy and embarrassment of my cross. The one is very different from the other; you will have a terrible experience with it. (Chapter 5, Verse 2)

The Wife seeing that the Husband is talking about making her part of his ignominies is in great fear; and as much as she has been courageous and intrepid in accepting the cross, so is she scared of the objection with which she is threatened. Many certainly want to bear the cross; but there is almost no one who wants to bear the infamy [There are painful, but honorable crosses, and very painful and very humiliating crosses (all together).] of the cross. When ignominy is proposed to this soul, it fears two things: one to be once again clothed in what it has been stripped of, namely itself and its natural faults [Note natural: these are therefore not sins.

In order to understand this, one must pay attention to that God to purify the spirit, (what the Blessed John of the Cross calls, Dark Night of the spirit,) allows the faults which appear wiped out and extinguished, to appear strong on the outside; I mean the natural faults of mood, promptitude, inequalities, and feelings all rebel. God then stripping the soul of the use of the divine virtues and of the facile practice of the good, all the faults reappear: the soul being then abandoned to itself, it suffers on all sides; on the side of God, weighs down its hand; on the side of the creatures, which slander it and persecute it; on the side of itself, all its feeling being rebellious; and on the side of the devils. And it is this terrible assemblage of so many strange crosses, which cause the death of the soul: for if it lacked one, that would be a refuge and a support, which would make it live in itself. These faults are not voluntary, no more than the experience of a thousand miseries and weaknesses which make up the sorrow of the soul, although it may not always know him; for the abandonment of God makes it believe that it is its fault. If it turns itself toward God, it feels rejected by him, and feels only his indignation: if it looks itself in the face, it sees only temptations, misery, poverty and faults; if it wants to turn itself toward the creatures; they are for the soul like thorns which prick it and push it back. It is as if hung, as if banished from all the beings, such as will be seen in Purification. What is more terrible for the soul is that usually God pushes these poor afflicted to the outside during that time, which is to say, that he puts them, by the necessity of their condition, outside their solitude and in the commerce of the world. Which torments them the most is that the more they long for detachment, the more despite themselves do they feel that their heart is taken in by everything: They suffer a lot from that. But when God made use of all the creatures and all their own faults, of the weight of his arms, of the spite of men and of devils, of the experience of their weaknesses, he delivers them from these things in one fell swoop, in order to receive them in him wholly pure. The souls, which do not let themselves be destroyed in this way, all their lives stay in themselves in their faults and properties. This is what I wanted to say.

What the Wife still wants to say is that in the beginning one suffers persecutions and aspersions with strength, because one knows very well that they are undeserved; and that one is strongly supported inwardly: but here it is no longer the same. As the soul is filled with feelings of fondness toward the creature, it believes itself to have in reality what it has only in feeling: Then it believes itself to be the most miserable soul in the world; it believes it deserves everything it is made to suffer, and carries such embarrassment and humiliation on the inside, that it is inexplicable. It believes itself the most wicked of all the creatures. And the more it felt detached from everything, and from tastes for God, and a certain lightness; the more does it feel its misery, its attachment and its burden: but in such a painful manner that it agonizes a thousand times a day. It seems to it that it has the taste for all the pleasures and the longing to enjoy them even though it flees them more than ever.]: the other to be soiled in the affections of the creatures. I am, it says, stripped of myself, of my faults, and of what there was of Adam the sinner in me; how will I ever be able to dress myself in that again? And however it seems to me, that there is only that which can bring me abjection and embarrassment: because for the scorn which would happen to me from the creatures, without me having caused them with my error, I would make a pleasure and a glory for myself out of it, hoping that this would glorify my God, and would make me yet more agreeable in his eyes. I cleaned and purified my affections in such a way, that there is nothing in me which is not of my Beloved; how would I still soil them by commerce [Note that I said (in the preceding Note) that it is obliged to take up the active life again, which is to say, if its condition, or unforeseen affairs, cast it outside: and as it had returned into solitude, painfully detaching itself from the creatures, it has much pain to return there. However if God did not cast it outside by the necessity of its state, it would not be slandered, because it would be unknown; and it would feel no new affections toward the creatures, because it would not see them: it would not know well enough its weakness or the dependence that it must have on grace, recognizing that it must not promise itself anything, but instead await everything from God, confide itself in him, distrust itself, hate itself, leave itself. Finally these pains and these sorrows are not felt by people who do not know God, or by those who deliver themselves to their dissoluteness: They are not watchful to feel the pain of an evil to which they deliver themselves voluntarily, extinguishing in themselves the Spirit of the Lord, and delivering themselves to all kinds of chaos, forgetting God, and becoming the same malice: Whereas these souls after having been tempted, purified, and tested, are by their unknown faithfulness, and by their extreme humiliation, found worthy of being received in God.] of the creatures?

O poor blind man, what do you protect yourself against? The Husband only wanted to test your fidelity, and to see if you were in all his wishes. He [It is easy to see that all that follows and relates to humiliation.

All this although badly explained and confusing, because that assumes a greater enlightenment in the Writings (or the Explanations of the Old Testament) where this book must be naturally enclosed does not fail to show that only natural faults, aspersions on the part of the creatures, and all the ordinary crosses are spoken about to the souls that God wants to purify and disappropriate.] passed for guilty, he has been covered in embarrassment, seized by disgrace, and placed among scoundrels, he who was innocence himself: and you who are criminal, you cannot bear passing for such! Oh will you be well punished for your resistance! (Chapter 5, Verse 3)

The Beloved despite the resistances of his Wife, [One must pay attention here, because it is of consequence, that we said in the beginning, that there was a voluntary resistance, and that this absolutely prevented the purifying operation of God, because he does not violate the freedom of man: and that there was also a natural resistance, which is certainly in the will, but without being voluntary: that this one is an extreme repugnance to its destruction. But whatever loathing the soul has, and whatever natural revolt it feels for its destruction, God does not fail to do it with authority, in virtue of the donation (giving) of itself that it made to him, and of the total abandon that it has not retracted, and does not retract then either, its will remaining subdued and subjugated to God, despite the revolt of the feelings. It is this abandon, this submission of the will, which resides only in the deepest part of itself, and which is sometimes very unknown to the soul, that I called the passage of the hand of God; because this is what makes room for his action in us, because of our liberty that he does not violate. One must inevitably follow this passage there, and establish it on this foundation.] carries her hand through a short passage which is still open to her, which is, a remnant of abandon despite the repugnancies that the soul feels in abandoning itself with so much excess. A soul of this degree brings a foundation of submission to all the wishes of God; in a way that it would refuse him nothing; but when God [When I say that God explains his plans, one must not believe that God himself shows in detail the things to renounce and sacrifice: no, it is not that. One must notice that we said at various times, that in God to say it is to do it. God explains his plans only by putting the soul in the crucible of the most extreme trials, as one will see; he reduces it to the point of sacrificing for him not only what it has, what all that it has, not only for the time, but for eternity. And in what way is this sacrifice done? By an absolute despair for itself, that Father James of Jesus, whom I cited earlier, (See Understanding Number 34) call a holy despair, because by making the creature lose all support in itself, he makes it enter into the entire abandon in the hands of God. For one must know that the more we despair for ourselves, the more we hope in God, though not always in a perceptible way; the more we love all certainty in ourselves and all self support, the more we enter into faith in God, denuded of every support; the more we hate ourselves, the more we love God. Everything that God removes from the soul is the matter of its sacrifice. But the last sacrifice of all, that in my Writings, I call, pure sacrifice, is the one that the soul does, when feeling itself as if abandoned by God, itself and the creatures, it says to God: My God, why have you abandoned me (Matthew 27:46); and then it adds with Jesus Christ (Luke 23:46): My God, into your hands I commend my spirit. It is properly the sacrifice of all himself. And it is this delivery of all oneself for this time and for

eternity, that I call the last sacrifice: after which Jesus Christ says (John 20:30): Everything is consummated: also everything is consummated (in the soul) through that.] explains his particular plans, and when using the rights that he has acquired over it, he asks it for the last renouncements and the most extreme sacrifices; ah it is for when all its guts are moved, and it finds much pain where it believed there to be no more: and this pain [All our pains comes only from our resistances, and our resistances from our attachments: the more one is tormented in the pains; the more soured they are: they are softened by always delivering oneself from them more and by letting oneself be devoured interiorly; the soul knows its bindings only as they are broken.] comes from it having been attached to something, without knowing it.

With this touch, all nature shivers; for it is a painful touch, which is most sensitive pain of the soul, like the most patient of men felt, when having suffered inconceivable evils without complaining, he could not stop himself from crying out at this touch from the hand of God [Job 19:21] To understand this will, once must know that the hand of God is his justice and his omnipotence. When Scripture say, he weighs down his hand on us; it is as if it said he makes us feel the weight of his justice. This touch from the hand of God, (for it is only a touch; if this was the application of his hand, the soul would be reduced to dust. There is only Jesus Christ who has borne the weight of Justice. Also when it is written about him, it is said that God brought down the strength of his arm onto him: it is the Holy Virgin who says it, fecit potentiam (Luke 1:15). For the creatures, it is not the same: the ones, which suffer the most, like Job, feel only the touch of this wholly divine hand.) This touch, I say, is painful for the man who is not yet purified, and all the harder, because God has more designs on him: but this divine hand is gentle, for he who is not proprietaire! This is what the Blessed John of the Cross express admirably, when he says; (See Entire Death Number 9, Purification Number 47) Dainty hand, flattering touch, at present which is harder to me, and which is all the more gentle to me because you have been cruel to me. The application of the hand of God is therefore the application of his justice.] ah, by grace, my friends forget all my other evils, which cause you so much horror! Have pity on me for only one thing; which is that the hand of God touched me. In the same way the wife feels herself shiver completely with this touch.

How jealous you are, o divine Husband, may your Mistress do your wishes; since a simple excuse which appears so just, offends you so strongly! Could you not prevent such a dear and faithful Wife from making this [The resistance that the soul makes to God here is of two natures, which have a relation to the requests that God made of it in the preceding verses. We saw in the Canticle that the Husband tells it; Open up for me, my Sister, my Wife; because I am laden with the drops of my passion. One must understand that the soul then sees very well, that God comes to it laden with sorrows to engulf it in sorrow: for its discourses are sorrowful impressions that God makes in it with all the possible sorrows, and at the same time with all the weaknesses; for if it could suffer with strength, it would be too happy. God gives it some views of infamy and disparagement: these views are followed by the effect. God joins to that the experience of a thousand weaknesses and miseries, an apparent loss of virtues, or rather of the force in the virtues; so that it finds itself covered in such embarrassment, and in such extreme sorrow that there is nothing which is equal to it: for when God brings down his hand on the inside, he delivers the exterior to slander, the spitefulness of men, and often to the Devil, to whom he gives full power over the bodies, which is such a terrible thing, that one cannot think of it without fright. God ordinarily, before delivering the exterior into the hands of the enemy, gives such an extraordinary taste of his justice, and such a vehement desire to satisfy it, not only for its own sins, but also for those of the others, that this desire makes everything languish. Then the soul, without specifying anything, is delivered to the rigors of Justice in general, without it being given any distinct view; after which God takes it at its word. When the trial lasts, it feels an extreme revolt against suffering; it sees no abandon in itself; it cries out with all its force to be delivered. When it is in the calm for a moment, its taste and its love of Justice is returned to it once again, in order for it to sacrifice itself; and it immolates itself once again to this same justice, without being able to do otherwise, until the storm returns. It then forgets its sacrifice, and its taste for Justice, and delivered as it is to all its loathings, it feels only the pains of death. At other times God, before testing the soul, makes it see on the whole the most extreme sufferings, and he asks it for its consent. There are souls which resist God, not being able to sacrifice themselves to his justice; some resist completely, others resist for a few days: and these resistances are terrible torments to them, especially to a soul which had been extremely faithful until then, and which had a certain secret support in its fidelity for having suffered, and for never having refused God anything, no matter how tough his wishes have been.

God therefore allows these resistances to immolate themselves to the cross and to pain, to receive him covered in blood like a Husband of blood and pain. The souls of this temper do not resist for a long time. However these resistances are necessary, in order to make them feel their own weaknesses, and make them know how far away they are from the courage that they believed themselves to have. There are such souls, which after an exquisite purity of felt love find themselves indeed weak against rigorous love, and if they have been faithful until then, the pain of spiritual impurity that they contracted by this resistance is a great torment to them.] resistance to you? But it was necessary for its consummation. The Husband permits this fault in his Wife in order to punish her, and at the same time [I forget to point out that what I say, in order to punish it and purify it of the attachment to purity and innocence, can never be applied other than to spiritual impurity, and not like carnal people have explained it; since I show that the resistance that it has made to sacrificing itself to God, is the impurity I am speaking about, just as one can see by attentively reading the proposition. Could you not prevent such a dear and faithful Wife from making this resistance to you? (Her faithfulness made up her purity and her docility her innocence.) But it was necessary for its consummation. (Please notice that I am speaking about resistance; and resistance to the abandon in order to endure the trials.) The Husband

permits this fault in his Wife (this fault of resistance) in order to punish it at the same time as to purify it of the attachments that it had to its purity and to its innocence. This fault being a resistance, the impurity that it contracts is therefore a spiritual impurity, caused by the resistance. If I had wanted to speak about a corporeal impurity, and if I had wanted to say what one wants to make me say, like God gave me the grace of knowing my language, I would have put quite the opposite, and I would have said; she delivered herself to the impurity in order to be purified of the attachment to her purity; which is absurd: for that can never be. It is said that what I wanted to have our Wife say, I cleaned my feet, how will I dirty them, is because she commits offenses. If it is for committing offenses, and if it is for being dirtied in this way, the resistance that she makes to that prevents her from losing its purity in this way; thus God has not permitted this fault in order to make it lose purity and innocence, like these people say: since it would be an obvious contradiction, in that the resistance to these things would make her more pure and more attached to her corporeal purity, far from removing it from her: and I say on the contrary that God allowed this resistance in his Wife in order to purify her of the attachment to her spiritual purity, which is too pursued faithfulness which is without slackening.

God wants her to deliver herself to suffer all the rigor of his justice, that she may be delivered like Job to the Devil in order to torment her: and it is these kinds of torments which purify her of the proprietary attachment to her corporeal purity; which is very involuntary in these souls and torments compared to hell, as will be seen. But this resistance is quite the opposite: it makes the soul contract a spiritual impurity, which is a resistance to the abandon to God, and an infidelity by weakness to the approach to the crosses. I do not know if I explained myself sufficient in that. I am ready to seal my faith with my blood. Like I had never imagined, that one could give a similar explanation, and that when I wrote that, I had never heard about all these creatures, or anything near; I did not think about explaining myself, and all the more, because that book was incorporated in, and not detached from those who express my feelings all along. If something presents a difficulty, I always offer to explain it as clearly as I am able.] to purify it of the attachment that it had to her purity and to her innocence, and of the attachment that she felt in the stripping of her own justice: for though she knew well, that her justice is her Husband's she nevertheless had some attachment to it, and she appropriates something from it. (Chapter 5, Verse 4)

It is as if this soul said: I raised the barrier, which was preventing my total loss [One can see (in the Article on Loss) what is this total loss.], and the consummation of my marriage; for this divine marriage can be consummated only if the total loss has arrived. I therefore removed this barrier by [This abandon always has relation to this sacrifice of trials and sufferings.] the most courageous abandon, and the most pure sacrifice there ever was. I [This opening is a renewed abandon: because the resistance having interrupted it in some way, an active renewal if abandon is necessary; and God demands it in this way from the soul: which marks that it had been unfaithful, since it needs an actual return and a renewal of perceived acts.] opened up to my Beloved, believing that he would enter, and that he would cure the pain that he had caused me by his touch; but alas, the blow would be too gentle if he brought the remedy so quickly! He hides himself, he flees, he passes beyond, he leaves this afflicted soul only [The wound that God gave to her is a wound of painful love, which makes her run after him with more haste: and her fault is resistance.] the wound that he gave to her, the pain of her fault, and the [Apparent and not real dirtiness, that she contracts by departing from her solitude.] dirtiness that she believes she contracted in raising herself.

However the goodness of the Husband is so great, that even though he hides himself, he does not fail to do great favors for his friends; and all the more great, because the deprivations are longer and harder; like he did to his Wife, who found herself in a new disposition, which was certainly advantageous to her, although she did not recognize it as such. It is that her soul melted and liquefied as soon as her Beloved had spoken, and that by this liquefaction she lost her hard and narrow qualities, which prevented the consummation of the spiritual marriage. (Chapter 5, Verse 6)

Unfortunate Wife! Never has anything similar happened to you. Because up to here your Husband was guarding you, you rested securely in his shadow; you were in assurance in his arms: but since he was moved away by your fault, ah, what has happened to you! You believe you have suffered [Notice that this is always affirmed, and that trials and sufferings are always spoken about there.] much from so many trials, that he had already made of your faithfulness; however they were very little, in comparison to what remains for you to suffer. What you suffered with him were only shadows of sufferings; and you should not expect less. Do you believe you will marry a God torn up by wounds, pierced by nails and stripped of everything, without being treated in the same way?

This soul finds itself beaten and hurt by all those who guard the city. Those who until the present had not dared attack it, and who however watch over it constantly, take their time to knock it down. Who are these guards? These are the [These ministers of the Justice of God are the devils, to whom God sometimes delivers these souls in a way as painful as it is distressing. This state happens sometimes, especially to those, which wavered in their abandon and which, resisted God like this one. That joined with the experience of their miseries takes away from them the support that they had in their own justice. Notice that I always said self-justice, which is to say, the appropriation that they made of their justice, and the faithfulness, which forms a support in self. One must lose these things in order to be disappropriated and have support only in the justice of God. They therefore lose this support by the uncertainty where they are placed from their salvation; which makes them enter into the justice of God, knowing his everything and their nothing, his omnipotence and their weaknesses: which establishes them in an abandon which no longer wavers.] ministers of the justice of God. They hurt it, and remove from it the so dear coat of its own justice. O unfortunate Wife; what will you do in such a merciless state? The Husband will no longer want you after such a sad accident,



which brings with self the abjection of having been mistreated by soldiers [It is easy to see that these soldiers are a comparison, which I make use of because the text says it in that way; but not that I have ever thought or wanted to say that this Wife had surrendered to soldiers in an infamous way. That appears so uncouth to me, that I am shocked that one could think it. These ministers, guards or soldiers are therefore the devils; this coat that they remove, is the assurance of salvation, and the support in our own works and our own justice: The wounds that they make, are often very real. I knew a holy daughter examined accurately by a Holy Bishop, on whose right breast the devil made a large wound three fingers long, that he had to think about with extreme pain. I have known several women like this. There was one in the Diocese of Sens, led by Monsieur Octave of Belgrade, at that time Archbishop of Sens, the Devil broke her arm: The Archbishop forbids him from touching her more; he has done nothing to her since. The life of this Nun is renounced, and I learned about it in more detail from a very old Sister who was then the Superior. Father Raveno Jesuite reports the same thing and much more amazing ones in the life of the Mother of the St. Augustine Convent in Canada.], and covered with wounds, until having left your coat in their hands even though it has been your principle ornament. If you continue to look for your Beloved, one will say that you are crazy to present yourself to him in this way: and besides, if you stop looking for him, you will die from listlessness: your [The State of this Wife is deplorable, only because she cannot be prevented from looking for her God, and because she loves him so passionately, that the more he flees, the more she looks for him, whereas the others do not look for him, and on the contrary look for their pleasures outside of him.] state is assuredly deplorable. (Verse 7)

As soon as the soul is entirely disappropriated, it is wholly disposed to be received in the nuptial bed of the Husband. –

He is fed (says this incomparable Wife) among the lilies of my purity: those of the soul, which please him much more than those of the flesh, are the general disappropriation; a soul without property, is a virgin soul: those of the body are the integrity of the senses. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

The interior of this soul is a wine, because everything there is liquid, everything flows out into God, without being stopped by any self-consistency. (Chapter 7, Verse 9)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. The difference and the inequality of the intellectual views is the cause of the light which proceeds from the paternal goodness, and why God spreads abundantly onto the creatures, or does not communicate himself at all; not having taken them up, because of their hardness [That is the true property] and their resistances; or even, makes it so that one same original, simple, primitive, immutable ray always of the same kind, though widely spread out onto them, operates various participations different from each other: the ones small, the others big; the ones dark and the other clearer, according to the capacity of the subjects which receive it. (*On the Heavenly Hierarchy* Chapter 9)

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

2. O how powerful is the love of Jesus Christ when it is pure and without any mixing with self-interest. Must we not put in the rank of mercenaries those who constantly seek only their own satisfaction --? Where will you presently find a man who wants to serve God for free? (Book 2, Chapter 11, Number 3)

3. My son, you cannot be entirely free, if you do not entirely renounce yourself. All those who make themselves owners of their own and who are possessed of their own love are as if bound and chained. (Book 2, Chapter 32, Section 1)

4. My son, leave yourself, and you will find me. Have no will or choice, strip yourself of property, and you will always grow in virtue; because as soon as you have entirely surrendered yourself to me, without taking up concern for yourself again, I will spread my grace in you with more abundance. (Book 2, Chapter 37, Section 1)

5. For how will you be able to be mine and me yours, if you are not entirely stripped, of all self will, on the inside and the outside? (Book 2, Chapter 37, Section 3)

6. Give everything for everything; no longer look for anything from yourself, after having given yourself. (Book 2, Chapter 37, Section 5)

### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

7. As self love cannot know what naked love is; neither can naked love know what property is: in that it would not like to have known anything as it's; because naked love sees only the truth, which in its nature is communicable to all,

cannot belong to anyone; and because self love is a hindrance to itself, carrying darkness and sin with itself, which blind fold its eyes, it can neither believe it or see it. –

But spiritual self love is even more dangerous, and more difficult to know than the carnal kind; because it is a more subtle and penetrating poison, from which few people are protected being much more covered under many subtleties ---. So I conclude that this self-love is the root of all the misfortunes, which can happen to us in this world and in the other. I see in the example of Lucifer how he takes from him for having had this pernicious love as a goal: but I see it still better in us, like our Father Adam led us there with this seed. (In her Life Chapter 35)

8. See Purification Number 18.

9. See Purification Number 18 (this is in the origin twice).

10. God consumes the understanding and the comprehension; and so he casts outside all the operations with which it could appropriate something spiritual, either for self or for its neighbor: otherwise it would not be clean in his presence. (In her Life Chapter 32)

11. See Confession Number 5.

12. I saw such jealous love, in that it refined and examined all things in this way by a trifling, with such great care and such great force, in order to reach its goal, which is to annihilate all its properties, of which [Note single fragment.] not a single fragment can remain in the divine presence; that even though I saw this more than diabolical sensual and self part of a terrible spitefulness however I saw it at the end remain almost annihilated by love, and by the power that he made use of against it. Being thus occupied in considering love in its operation, my self part with all its spite could no longer give me any fear, and Purgatory and Hell had not frightened me; but if I had seen a small clash, and the slightest resistance to this pure love, that would have been a Hell to me. (Life Chapter 41)

13. Love annihilated not only this wicked part on the outside, but even the interior and spiritual parts which tasted and understood the divine things, and seemed to want to completely transform itself into God, and to annihilate this sensual part. When this superior and spiritual part had done well enough, and it thought it had vanquished and humiliated this inferior and sensual part, taking away from it all the means to feed itself, and it seem that it had reduced all the good for itself, and could enjoy it in peace; then this vehement and insatiable love cropped up in furor and said to it: what do you plan on doing? I want everything for me: [*This has expanse and is terrible?*] do not think I am leaving you the slightest good either for the soul or the body. I want each to remain naked and disarmed of everything which is below me: know that all these views, these feelings and these perfections, that I do not approve, are below me: and when I come to pass through the soul, I am so subtle, that all its perfection before my eyes is a shortcoming: that is why I do not want there to be anything below me which can remain being, except those that I approve as good. One cannot be over me either: that is why the more you climb up high by whatever perfection you may have, the more I will always be over you in order to ruin all the imperfections, which would happen in the unitive views that you could have. (Life, Chapter 41)

14. See Pure Love, Number 13.

15. O pure Love, by your violence, you make the least stain of imperfection a Hell, greater and more rigorous than that of the damned! This is what no one will understand or believe, other than he who will be experienced in you. (Life, Chapter 6)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

16. Every appetite, though it may be of the least imperfection, soils and darkens the soul in its way, and prevents its perfect union with God. (Ascent of Mt. Carmel, Book 1, Chapter 9)

17. O who could give to understand to where God wants to bring this abnegation! Without doubt it must be like a death and a temporal, natural and spiritual annihilation in everything, (as for the esteem of the will) in which death all gain and profit are found; this is what Our Lord meant. [Mark 8:35] Whoever wants to save his soul will lose it; which is to say that he who for the love of Jesus Christ renounces all his will can desire, want and taste, choosing what more resemble the cross, (what Our Lord calls in St. John, [John 12:25] to abhor one's soul) that man will win it. –

The same Lord says [Matthew 11:30] My yoke is gentle, and my burden light, which is the cross, because if man is determined to subject himself, and to bear this cross, (which is a true resolution and determination to want to find and endure travails in all things for the love of God,) he will find in it a great lightening and much gentleness, in order to walk through this path thus denuded of everything without wanting anything. But if he claims to have something with property, either of God, or of anything, he is not denuded or disappropriated [*Note: disappropriated in everything.*] in

everything, and he will not be able to keep this path, or climb through this narrow path. I would certainly like to be able to persuade the spirituals, how this path of God does not consist of a multiplicity of considerations or means, or tastes, even though that may be necessary to beginners, but in one single necessary thing, which is to know how to renounce oneself deliberately, according to the exterior and the interior, exerting oneself to suffer for Jesus Christ and to be annihilated in everything: for by practicing [*Through this path which includes everything, one practices everything.*] this, everything which has been said and several things more are done and found here. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 7)

18. One must know that until the soul is in this state of perfection, which we are speaking about, as spiritual as it may be, there always remains for it some inclination and attachment to appetites and small tastes, and other imperfections, either natural or spiritual, which it goes about following, and in this way tries to indulge again; because for the understanding, there usually remains some imperfections or appetites to know things; concerning the will, it lets itself be carried away to small tastes and appetites of self. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 18)

19. It is a property of perfect love, to not want to allow or take anything for self, or attributes anything to itself, but everything completely to the Friend: for if even in base and worldly loves that is practiced, how much more in divine love, where reason obliges us to it so much. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 24)

20. The soul already feeling wholly inflames in the divine union, and transformed by love into God, and feeling the rivers of brisk water run from his stomach, which rivers Our Lord Jesus Christ said [John 7:38] must come forth from such souls, it seems to it that since it is transformed into God with such great strength, and so highly disappropriated, and decorated with such great riches, gifts and virtues, that it is so close to beatitude, that there is only a light and slender veil between the two. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Prologue)

21. See Entire Death, Number 9.

22. The soul goes about singing to God: -- You [Psalms 29:12-13 (or 30:11-12 KJV)] have turned my tears into joy, you broke my sack, [*This sack is the property which encloses all corruptions.*] and surrounded me with cheerfulness, so that my glory may sing to you, and that I may no longer have any remorse [*The soul free from property has no more remorse, even though it does not believe itself justified for that; but a sincere innocence and simplicity keep it outside itself, in such a way that the Master no longer reproaches it for anything: it no longer hears this voice of the slave driver, which Job speaks about (Job 3:18) who has been such a great torment to him in the time of property. In order to give some light to this, which is entirely for the state of purification, (but that is so bound that it cannot be separated,) one must pay attention to the soul of the souls of purgatory. They have two pains: perhaps I wrote it in the treatise I wrote on Purgatory. (See this Treatise Part 2, Number 33 in the Opuscles of the Author.) The first is the application of the justice of God, or of this divine hand which is an intolerable torment to them; the second is their own impurity, which is an infinitely painful sore; but this pain lasts only as much time as is necessary to purify them. They are not purified rather than they no longer feel pain, even when they stay in purgatory. They no longer have the pain of property, since it is no longer; nor is the pain of the application of the hand of God, because this hand is painful to them only because of their impurity; so that as soon as they are pure, this hand or this justice which was so painful to them, becomes a beatitude to them. It is the same way with the soul in this life: As soon as its property is destroyed, it no longer has any pain from property, or any remorse as St. Catherine of Genes says, that it no longer had any of it (See Confession Numbers 3 & 6): and this divine hand is no longer hard for it like we just saw, but very gentle and beatific. During the whole path, the soul has a rigorous slave driver inside itself, who lets nothing pass into it; he is an exact and rigorous judge and censor, who incessantly condemns what appears to the soul to be very little condemnable: but after death and disappropriation, it is no longer the same thing; the soul finds itself in an infinitely profound peace. I do not doubt, that if it made new mistakes, he no longer reproaches it for them; but as these faults are lights, he consumes them in a second in the fire of his love.], seeing that no pain approaches it there. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 6)*

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

23. Rusbroche (speaking about the Enlightened Ones): Some of this class make use of a great choice, and choose many things; and also pray and long for God to grant them many rare and singular favors: that is why they are often deceived; God allowing it to be thus; so well that by the intervention of the Devil they obtain what they desire, which they nevertheless attribute to their saintliness, considering themselves entirely worthy of everything: which is not wonderful, seeing that they are sick with pride, and are neither touched nor enlightened divinely. They therefore stop and rest in themselves [*These people are well removed from walking through the path of faith and renouncement, who look for themselves in everything. One should make these different paths parallel, in order to these Enlightened Ones, who look for themselves in everything, reflecting upon themselves constantly, love only themselves, and do not love*

God.], and are entirely inclined, according to their desire and appetite, to look for and take the flavor and the interior taste and the spiritual comforts of nature: which one can with just cause name spiritual luxury; because it is a dissolute inclination of natural love, which is always reflective on oneself, and which searches for and desires its convenience in all things. They are always sick from spiritual pride, and given up to their own will: from where it comes that they are sometimes so carried away by affection, desire and appetite for the things that they wish for, and strive so much to obtain them from God by importunity, that they are usually deceived, and some even seized by the evil spirit. Without doubt, as much dough as there is, they all lead a life contrary to charity, and to this loving conversion, where one offers oneself completely, with everything one can do and have, in honor and in love of God. (One the decoration of the Spiritual Wedding Book 2, Chapter 77) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 1, Chapter 8, Section 3)

24. Dom Bartelemy of the Martyrs (speaking about perfect men): Their [*The difference between the two (namely between the false enlightened ones and the true perfect ones) is well expressed: and one can see the truth of the interior path by the opposition of the two ways of acting.*] intention and their memory are carried only to God; they are always occupied in him interiorly; they are so attached to God, that in seeing they are like the blind, in listening they remain like the deaf, in speaking they are like mutes: these people lead a heavenly and Angelic life on the earth, and can rightly be called worldly Angels. –

Hence soldier of Jesus Christ, if you want to arrive at this port, try with all your forces to observe the following things. [Renouncement, Number 6] Do not possess anything with an engagement of your heart; do not willingly attach yourself to any creature; do not humanly long for the friendship and familiarity with any man, whatever saintliness he has: for only the bad things, but even the good ones, will harm this wisdom, if they are loved or searched for dissolutely; in that a strip of gold placed in front of our eyes, does not obstruct our view any less than a strip of iron. Chase away self love and uproot it with all your forces; and leaving self will, give yourself totally to God, and plunge yourself or transform yourself perfectly into him. Never say, either with your mouth, or with your heart, with regard to yourself or to your own comfort; I want that; I do not want it: I choose that; I reject it: and then never look for anything; but denuding yourself of all kind of property, strip yourself of yourself, and die so much to yourself and to all things of the world, just as if you were never supposed to live, or as if you were entirely dead in everything: seek the honor of God, and do your best so that his will may be accomplished in all things. (*Spiritual Summary* Part 2, Chapter 10) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 3)

25. Taulere: It is not permitted for he who loves sincerely, to look for self, or for the love of self, of pleasure and of the delight in this spiritual interior sweetness, even though that seems licit for the imperfect and beginner servants of Jesus Christ, but not at all for the perfect. (Sermon of the 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Holy Trinity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 2)

26. There are some that the exterior exercises delight marvelously, who give themselves up to that with great joy, and take so much pleasure and glory in it, that for this reason they are much less agreeable to God; and this delight could indeed be such, that they would be wholly disagreeable to God, and such that he would turn away his sight and his heart from them, when they seek themselves rather than God. – This is what makes us know, that one must burn with the fire of love, and a second time sacrifice to God all the pleasure that one can have in deeds and in the exercise of virtues. (Sermon 1 for the feast of St. Matthew) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 2)

27. This harmful love always searches for something of its own, and for this reason, it is found in the Sermons, and receives the very holy Sacrament, in order to receive something of its own. Whoever has ears to hear, may he hear. (Sermon of the 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Holy Trinity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 2)

28. Rossignolius: The pleasure which proceeds from the gentleness of the spirit, through which gentleness we are used to being very much pleased in ourselves, feeds the love of ourselves, more than the enticements of worldly things. (*On the Perfection of Christian Discipline*, Book 6, Chapter 6) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross* Part 2, Chapter 10, Section 2)

29. Albert the Great: These apparitions or images, although they do not appear to be sins, even the slightest ones, and seem wholly exempt from guilt, if they are great obstacles to this holy exercise and this work; and consequently although they have seemed useful and necessary, either big or small, they must be immediately reject as harmful and pernicious. (*On Attachment to God*, Chapter 4) And again: Your spirit must be purified of all apparitions and sheathings and obscuring like an Angel bound to a body. (Chapter 8) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 20)

30. St. Bonaventure (explaining these words of Cantic 5:3): I wash my feet, how will I dirty them? How will I spoil them yet again with shadows and images of temporal things, seeing that both intellectual operations, and the images in the intellectual exercise, are reputed to be and held as stains and stumbling blocks? (Opuscles: 1 of the Seven Paths to Eternity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 20)

31. The Abbot Gilbert: Alas, how this bad day lights us around me! How has it robbed my affection? Everything which can trouble or soil the spirit comes to melt on all sides and is flung into my mind (thought); for even though the spirit repels it with a severe resolution, it is nevertheless dirtied by the single touch of these thoughts, which assail it with fury and impetuosity; they are not imputed to sin by coming to melt with violence; nevertheless they do wrong to the so desired cleanliness. (Sermon 1 on the Cantic) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 20)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

32. Property signifies everything imperfect and sentient, which needs purification, because it distracts the will of the spiritual conversation with God, even though that happens in the first movements, and without freedom. (*Notes on John of the Cross*, Disciple 1, Sentence 1)

#### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

33. Humid and liquid things easily receive the figures and limits that one wants to give them, in that they have no [*The true characteristic of property is, to be fixed in itself: in order to destroy this fixation, the soul must lose all forms and figures of self, all self consistency, by the strongest purification.*] firmness or solidity, which stops or limits them in themselves. Put some [*Admirable comparison of entire disappropriation.*] liquid in a vessel, and you will see that it will remain bounded by the limits of the vessel; which if it is round or square, the liquid will be the same, having no limit or figure, except that of the vessel which contains it.

The soul is not the same by nature: for it has its own figures and limits; it has its figure by its habits and inclinations, and its limits by its own will: and when it is fixed [*True property*] in its own inclinations and wishes, we say that it is hard, which is to say; stubborn. I will remove, says God [*Ezekiel 11:19 - And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: (KJV)*] your heart of stone, which is to say, I will remove your stubbornness from you. In order to [*Way of purifying the property.*] change wood, iron or stone one needs hammer and fire. One calls he who does not easily receive divine impressions, a heart of wood, iron or stone, He remains in his own will among the inclinations which accompany our depraved nature: on the contrary a gentle, manageable or accommodating heart is called a melted and liquefied heart. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 12)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

34. May they be careful [*He is speaking to the beginners.*] to not make themselves owners of any exercise of spirit, when God draws them elsewhere: and even though they must greatly cherish solitude, they must certainly be on guard to make themselves owners of it. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 10)

35. The soul attached to its own exercises, is not yet disposed to pass entirely into God; in that it is not leaving itself enough, in order to follow him purely and nakedly, there where he wants to draw it to him in spirit. It is not a thing of small importance to attend to God in spirit: one must do so deliberately, without rest and without reserve. For the creature must pass from itself into God; and the one which has an infinite desire for God, would not be satiated, if it was not full of God. Consequently it must empty itself entirely of itself here below, which is a wonderful thing. When that is accomplished, then the earth is spirit, even in a human body, which shares in his spiritual qualities. But perhaps it is not necessary for us to lose ourselves so deeply and so far from ourselves, since we are as removed from this excellent state, as we are subtly lying in ourselves. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 12)

36. Once the nature is spiritualized, it is discriminating to search for itself. It reflects only on self and its own good in the gifts of God, and even looks for itself in God. It is extremely inclined toward its own excellence; and the greater and more noble its knowledge is, the more does it relate that to itself, especially if what it knows is worthy of being loved, like the gifts of God are which it loves only because of the taste and the flavor that it finds there, and not in God who is infinitely different than his gifts. Now what makes this stranger is that the greater the advancement is, the more this chaos and this misfortune is to be feared; in that the nature being in love with its own love, and trapped by itself in the gifts of God, orders and determines them for self in a way which is unknown to it: which can be so subtle that hardly can anyone notice it. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 19)

37. There are as many degrees of liking self in men, as they fear in various ways to lose themselves; some according to the spirit and the path of naked love; others according to reason; others according to sense; others according to

morality. That is why the extent of all this and all its bad effects, must be explained to them as widely as possible; like many Mystics did, and we also as much as I could, as much for me as for the others.

Whoever does not by experience know the paths of the nature, whether they be agreeable or disagreeable to him, does not know what we are saying; he knows nothing on the matter of the discretion of the spirits, and he is not lost in the region of the true spirits, who are dead to all feelings. I do not mean to say that they no longer have any feelings; but it is that they send them back forthwith to their source, which is God, without making any consideration of them for themselves. No one can be said to be truly Mystic, who is not very well experienced in this learning of the paths of the nature, as much in self as is the others. But it seems that the more one searches for this learning, the more one is moved away from it, in that one does experience on the inside what God is used to distributing to good souls, either little by little, or sometimes all at once, which are the infused habits, whose acts are interior.

Those who remain on the outside, and who nevertheless attend to prayer, are slow, heavy and inordinately long in their procedures, in that they rest there directly or indirectly. The true spirituals are not affected by anything but God alone, and have nothing of self, or in the sensory things or in themselves. They remain tranquil and ordered in God, and in an ineffable way possess him over all his gifts, doing the entire exterior purely, righteously, quickly and without sensory affection. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 19)

38. God convinces the soul as much as he can to lose itself to itself and to all the creatures, and to live thus lost in him, principally in the time of its greatest interior desertion, and of that, which is exterior on the part of the creatures. In this practice and faithfulness consists the holiness of the faithful Wife. –

It is true that these sorts of eagles are very rare, considering that today men seek God only for themselves, and not in the least for him. They are friends of his Majesty only at the table and at the wedding. Everywhere else, they are idolatrous of themselves in the enjoyment [*I add here, that as a person would be proprietary with his money, which preserve him and would give none to his neighbor in need; an enlightened person would be believing himself owner of the gifts of God, if he did not share with others in need; and the same liberality that he had for his temporal goods, is given to him for his spiritual goods.*] of the excellent gifts of God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 23)

39. See Abandon, Number 31.

40. It is to be feared that you put a great foundation of holiness in all your exercises; that is why I say, that if they are not constantly accompanied by a very pure, very humble, very nude and eternally dying love without any respite, and without the least lack of attention by yourself, you are not truly as one should be. (Letter 63)

## SECTION 49 PURE LOVE

### SHORT METHOD

Be content with everything that God makes you suffer. If you love him purely, you will not look for him less in this life on Calvary than on Tabor.

One must love him as much on Calvary as on Tabor, since that is the place, where he makes Love appear the most.

It is impossible to love God without loving the cross; and a heart which has the taste of the cross, finds the same most bitter things gentle, pleasant and agreeable: [*Proverbs 27:7 - Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. (KJV)*] a famished soul finds the things, which are bitter to be sweet; because it finds itself as famished for its God, as for the cross. The Cross gives God, and God gives the cross. (Chapter 7, Numbers 1-2)

The interior is not a fort, which is taken by cannon and by violence: it is a kingdom of peace, which is possessed by love. (Chapter 12, Number 5)

Prayer is nothing other than a heat of love, which melts and dissolves the soul, refines it and makes it climb up to God. As it is melted it gives off its scent; and this scent comes from the charity, which burns it. (Chapter 20, Number 2)

The soul being completely turned in this way is in charity and it remains there: and [*1 John 4:16 - And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*] whoever remains in charity, remains in God. The soul following the allure of God, and remaining in his love and in his charity, always thrusts itself more into this same love. (Chapter 22, Number 5)

A father loves discourse that love and respect put in disorder, because he sees that comes from the heart; better than a dry, vain and sterile though well studied speech. O may certain glances of love charm and vanish him! They express infinitely more than all language and all reasoning.

In order to have wanted to learn to love with method the Love itself, one has lost a lot of this same love. O that it is not necessary to learn the art of loving! The language of love is barbarous to him who does not love; but it is very natural to him who loves; and one never learns to love God better than by loving him. In this occupation the most coarse often become the most able; because they go to it more simply and more cordially. (Chapter 23, Numbers 7-8)

### CANTICLE

The creature which aspires to the divine union, being well persuaded of the Everything of God and of its nothingness, must come forth from itself, having only scorn and hate for self, in order to keep all its esteem and its love for its God. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

Its neck represents its pure charity, which is the greatest support, which remains for it. (Chapter 1, Verse 9)

Although you may already be very beautiful in your denuding, which marks a pure heart and a non-feigned love; we will give you what you still need to enhance the sparkle of your beauty, by adding more precious ornaments to it. These ornaments will be chains, as a sign of your perfect submission to all the wishes of the King of glory. But they will be of gold, in order to represent, that acting only by a very purified love, you have only the simple and pure view of the good-pleasure and of the glory of God in everything you do or suffer for him. (Chapter 1, Verse 10)

My drunkenness is completely pardonable to me; since my King made me enter into his divine wine cellars. It is there that he ordered Charity in me. ---

What is this order [*this regulation*] that God places in charity? O love, God-charity! You alone can reveal it. It is that he makes this soul, which by a movement of charity wanted all the possible good for itself in relation to God, neglect itself entirely, in order to no longer think about its Beloved. It neglects all interest in salvation, perfection, joy, comfort, in order to think only about the interest of its God. It no longer thinks about enjoying his embraces; but about suffering for him. It no longer asks for anything for itself; but only that God be glorified. It enters into the interest of the divine Justice, contesting with all its heart everything it will do by itself and in itself, either for the time, or for eternity. It cannot love either in self, or in any creature, except that which is God's and for God; and not what is in it and for it, however great and necessary it appears.

Here is the order [*and the regulating*] of the charity that God puts in this soul; its love has become perfectly chaste. All the creatures are nothing to it: it wants them all for its God, and does not want any for self. O may this order of charity give strength for the terrible states that one will have to pass into the following part! But it cannot be known or tasted by those who are not there; for not having drunk of this wine of the Husband. (Chapter 2, Verse 4)

The middle and the whole inside of this place of triumph, is furnished with very expensive ornaments, which are certainly included under the name of charity, as if being what greater and more precious things there are. And is it not in Jesus Christ where [*Colossians 2:3, 9 - (3) In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (9) For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (KJV)*] all the treasures and the fullness of the Divinity are? It is him

[John 3:34 - *For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. (KJV)*] that the Holy Spirit has been given beyond all measure. The Holy Spirit then fills the middle and all the inside of this majestic throne; since it is the love of the Father and the Son; and also the love with which God loves men: and since as he is the union of the Divine People, it is also the knot which binds the pure souls with Jesus Christ. –

It is unbelievable how necessary it is that these chosen souls devour crosses, disgraces and reversals.

Finally all the inside is filled with charity, since these living thrones, of the most High [*This is the feeling of the Blessed John of the Cross (in his Enigma).*] being full of love, they are also decorated with all the fruits and ornaments of love, which are the good works, the merits, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the practice of the most pure and most solid virtues. (Chapter 3, Verse 10)

The Husband compares the will of this Mistress to a ribbon stained in scarlet, which signifies the affections reunited in a single will, which all charity and all love: all the forces of this will being reunited in their divine object. – The pomegranate has several seeds, which are all enclosed in a rind: just as your thoughts are as if reunited in me alone by your pure and perfect love. (Chapter 4, Verse 3)

I drank my wine and my milk. What is this wine that you drank, o divine Savior, and which you have been so intoxicated by, that you forgot yourself? This wine was the excessive love that he brought to me, which made him forget that he was God, in order to think only about their salvation. He was so intoxicated by it that a Prophet said about him [Lamentations 3:30 - *He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach. (KJV)*] that he will be surfeited with (opprobriums - public disgrace, ill fame, contempt, reproach); so strong was his charity. (Chapter 5, Verse 1)

True love has no eyes to look at itself. This afflicted Mistress forgets her wounds, even though she is still bleeding: she no longer remembers her loss; she does not even speak about it; she thinks only about him that she loves, and she looks for him with all the more force, because she finds more obstacles to her possession. She addresses herself to interior souls, and says to them: O you, to whom my Beloved will without doubt uncover himself, I entreat you to tell him that I am languishing with love for him. What, o most beautiful of women, do you not want that one speaks to him rather about your wounds, and that he is told of what you suffered in looking for him? No, no, responds this generous soul, I am too rewarded for my injuries, since I suffered them for him; and I prefer them to the greatest goods. Say only one thing to my Beloved that I languish with love for him. The wound that his love made in the bottom of my heart is sharp, that I am insensitive to all the exterior pains; I dare to say that even at that price, they are refreshments to me. (Chapter 5, Verse 8)

If the greatest waters of afflictions, of contradictions, or miseries, poverties and crossings could not extinguish the charity in such a soul; one should not believe that the rivers of surrender (abandonment) to providence can do it; since they are the ones who preserve it. If man had enough courage to abandon everything he possessed, and his whole self, in order to have this pure charity, which is acquired only by the loss of all the rest; one must not believe that after such a generous effort to acquire a good that he values more than all things, and which effectively is worth more than the whole Universe, he would then come to scorn it, to the point of taking up again what he left. (Chapter 8, Verse 7)

Perfect charity does not know what it is to think about its own interests. (Chapter 8, Verse 12)

The soul which has arrived at this degree, enters into the interests of divine Justice, and with regard to itself, and with regard to the others, in such a way, that it could not want any other fate for itself, or for any other one, than the one that this divine Justice would like to give it for the time and for eternity. The Wife also has the most sincere charity toward one's neighbor which ever existed, no longer serving him but for God, and in the will of God. But even though she was completely ready to be accursed for her brothers, like St. Paul [*Romans 9:3 - For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: (KJV)*], and though she works towards nothing but their salvation, she is nevertheless indifferent to the success; and she could not be afflicted either by her own loss, or by that of any creature, looked at from the side of the Justice of God. What she cannot endure is that God be dishonored; because God arranged (ordered) charity in her: since this time she has entered into the most pure dispositions of perfect charity. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. See Consistency, Number 1.
2. See Divine Motion, Number 1.

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. See Property, Number 2.
4. Certainly love is a great thing; love is an admirable good, since it alone makes what is heavy light, and since it endures with equal tranquility the various accidents of life. It bears without pain that which is arduous, and makes sweet



and agreeable that which is bitter. The love of Jesus is generous, it pushes the souls to great deeds, and excited them to always desire that which is more perfect. Love always tends to on high, and it does not endure being held back by base things. Love wants to be free and disengaged from all the affections of the earth, lest its interior light be offended, and it finds itself hindered in the goods, or beaten down by the evils of the world. There is nothing in heaven or on earth, which is either gentler, or stronger, or more elevated, or more extended, or more agreeable, or purer, or better than love; because love was born from God, [*I John 4:7, 16 – (7) Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (16) And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*] and being raised above all the creatures; it can rest only in God. (Book 3, Chapter 5, Section 3)

5. He who loves is always in joy; he runs, he flies; he is free and nothing holds him back. He gives everything for the everything, and possesses everything in everything; because he is resting in this unique and sovereign God, which is above everything, and from flows out and precedes all the goods. He never stops at the gifts that are made to him, but he raises himself with all his heart toward he who gives them to him. Love cannot often be bounded its love carries him away beyond all boundaries. Love does not feel the pain, or consider value the work; it undertakes beyond it forces it never excuses itself with impossibility; because it believes that nothing is impossible for it, and everything is permitted for it. Love finds strength to come to the end of all things. –

Love is vigilant; it does not sleep in the slumber itself. It is not narrowed in affliction, it does not tire in the great works, it is not troubled by the frights that it is given, it always raises itself on high like a living and ardent flame, and redoubles its vigor with everything that is opposed to it in order to stop it. There is only he who loves [*Admirable*] who can understand the cries of love, and the words of fire of an acutely touched soul, when it says to him; You are my God, you are my love; you are mine, and I am completely yours. –

May your love possess me wholly, and being wholly burnt and ravished outside of myself, I raise myself above me. (Book 3, Chapter 5, Sections 4-6)

6. He who loves wisely does not consider the gift of him that he loves, as much as the love of him who gives it to him. This love is much more precious to him than all the advantages that he receives from it; he places his Beloved without comparison above all his gifts. He who loves me generously, love me more than everything I give to him; and it is in me that he puts his joy and not in my gifts. (Chapter 6, Section 4)

7. Once my grace enters into a heart and establishes it in true charity, the impression of desire do not touch him, he is no longer found in the squeezing, he is no longer possessed by self love. Charity makes itself victorious over everything it enlarges the soul and redoubles its forces. (Book 3, Chapter 9, Section 3)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

8. She said to her Love: It is possible, o gentle Love, that you cannot be loved without consolation, and without hope for good in Heaven or on earth? She was answered, that such a union could not exist without great peace, and without an extreme contentment of spirit and body. Finally she said: o Love, I cannot understand that one must love something other than you, and if I understood it, I would be greatly pained by that. –

She said that divine love is properly and truly our own love, because we have been created for this love: but love of any other thing should be called hate; because it deprives us of our true and proper love, which is God. Love then he who loves you, namely God; and leave that which does not love you, namely the love of all the other things, which are below God; because it is the enemy of this true love, in that he gives him obstacles. O if I were able to make this truth seen, touched felt by some taste, like I feel it, I am certain that there would be no creature on the earth which would not love this pure love: so that if the sea was the abyss of divine love, there would be no man or woman who would not drawn him or herself there; and whoever would be moved away from the sea, would do nothing but walk to fling himself into it, because this love is so gentle and so agreeable, that every other one in comparison is only sadness and affliction. It makes man so rich, that every other thing outside of him alone, seems pure misery to him. It makes him so light, that it seems to him that he cannot feel the earth under his feet; and because he has all his affection on high, he cannot feel any pain on earth: and he is so free, that without any hindrances he always remains with God. If I were asked, what do you feel? I would answer: what the eye cannot see, nor the ear hear, and I bear this testimony to the truth, by the feeling that I have about it according to my capacity, without deceiving myself: but about what I feel, it seems to me that it is a shame to say such faulty words about it; being assured, that all which can be said about God, is not God, nor equal to God; but these are only some small morsels which fall off the table. (In her *Life*, Chapter 29)

9. See Property, Number 12.

10. See Communications, Section 2, Number 3.

11. See Non-Desire, Number 10.

12. This true love of knowledge of which you are looking for, is not yet this one: but when I consumed the imperfections of man, both in the exterior and in the interior, I descend with a very fine thread of gold, which is my hidden and secret love, and to this thread a hook is tied which takes the heart of man, and this heart remains wounded and bound by it, in such a way that it cannot be moved, or want to be moved; because I pull this heart, me who is his object and his end; and he does not understand it. Put me who is he who holds the thread in his hand, I always pull it to me with such a subtle and penetrating love, that man remains overcome, vanquished and completely outside of self: and as a hanged man does not touch the earth with his feet, and remains in the air attached to the rope which causes *[It is love which is the author (though hidden) of the death of the soul.]* its death; so this spirit remains attached to the thread of this subtle love, which dissipates all the imperfections of man, even the most hidden and the most subtle and unknown ones; and everything that he loves after that, he loves it with this thread of the love to which he has his heart tied. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 1)

13. O Love, the heart which tastes you at the beginning of the eternal life, even starting with the world. But, o Lord, you keep this operation secret and hidden to its owner, for fear that with his property he may place obstacles to your work.

O Love, whoever feels you, does not understand you; and whoever wants to understand you cannot know you! O Love, our life, our beatitude, our repose! You carry every good with you, and you move every evil away from yourself. O heart wounded by divine love, you remain incurable; and being led by this gentle wound until death, you begin again to live a life, which has no end. O fire of love what are you doing in this man? You purify him completely just as fire purifies gold: then you lead him to Heaven with you, in order to enjoy the end *[There is much difference between being in one's end, and enjoying this same end: but the soul does not enjoy this same end as perfectly as in the other life.]* for which you created him.

Love is a divine fire: and just as material fire always heats, and operates according to its nature; so does the love of God by its nature always operate in man, and climb toward its end, and on its part never ceases to operate for the good and the usefulness of man, which he is always in love with; and if someone does not feel the operation of it, it is his own fault: because God does not cease to do good to man as long as he is in this life, and he is always in love with his love. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 4)

14. O Love, I can no longer keep silent, and I cannot speak like I would like about your gentle and gracious operations! Your love with which I am filled on all sides, gives me a desire to speak, and I cannot do it. I converse with myself in my heart: but when I want to pronounce a word, and say what I feel, I remain short, and I find myself deceived by this weak tongue. –

I long to speak about this love once before leaving this life, and to say how I feel it in me, how he operates there, and what he wants from this man in whom he pours himself, or which he omits no part, that he does not entirely fill with a gentleness which surpasses all gentleness, and with a contentment which cannot be expressed; so that man would let himself be burned alive by this Love; because God mixes a certain zeal into this love, which zeal makes it so that man does not worry about any contrariness, however great it may be. –

This Love is so effective and so enlightening, that it draws all our imperfections outside of their dark and secret caverns, and places them before our eyes, so that we may give a remedy to it, and so that we may purge them. This love rules and governs our will so that it may be strong and constant in fighting against the temptations. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 4)

15. God fills man with love, he draws him to self with love, he makes him operate by love with great force and virtue against all the world, against Hell and against himself; and this love is not known, so that one cannot speak about it. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 13)

16. This love cannot be understood in the least, either by exterior signs, or by all the martyrdoms that one could endure for the love of God: it is only he who feels it, who can understand something about it. Everything which can be said about love, is nothing; because the further one goes, the less one knows about it: but the heart remains filled and content, it looks for nothing else, and would not like to find any thing other than what it feels. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 14)

#### ST. TERESA

17. I think that this happens like this, because the soul strongly in love with the love of Jesus Christ its Husband, has all these caresses, all these lapses, these deaths, these afflictions, these delights and these joys with him, after it has left all the comforts of the world for his love, and it has entirely delivered and surrendered itself into his hands; and this not from words like it happens to some, but with a very genuine love consumed by works. –

I beseech you to not be amazed by caressing and loving words between God and the soul that you notice in Holy Scripture. The love that he brought to us, and that he brings to us, being such as we are, amazes me more. (*Concept of the Love of God*, Chapter 1)

18. See Abandon, Number 17.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

19. God can certainly pour out the love and increase it, without communicating or increasing any distinct intelligence. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 18, Verse 2)

20. The soul, or said better, the Wife already said, that she had entirely delivered herself to her Husband without saving anything: at present she deduces the means that she keeps to accomplish it; her body, her soul, her powers and all her skillfulness being employed, no longer in things which concern her, but in those who do service for her Husband; and says, that for this reason she no longer searches for her own interest, or her tastes, and no longer is occupied in other things and communications which are outside of God: and moreover that with the same God she no longer keeps any other style of way of behaving but the exercise of love, because she changed all her first way of proceeding in love.

All the powers and skillful maneuvers of my soul and my body, (that beforehand I was employing somewhat in useless things,) I put them in the exercise of love, which is to say that all the skillfulness of my soul and my body is moved by love, everything I do by love. Now one must notice here that when the soul arrives at this state, every exercise of the spiritual part, which is the soul, and the exercise of the sensory part, which is the body, either to act, or to suffer, in whatever way, always brings about for it a greater love and delight in the Friend; indeed even the exercise of prayer and communication with God, which before was accustomed to being in other considerations and means, is now every exercise of love; in a way that either it is occupied in the temporal, or that it is occupied in the spiritual and in the communication with God, this soul can always say; TO LOVE IS MY VOCATION; I NO LONGER HAVE ANY OTHER PASSION. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 20)

21. See Loss, Number 29.

22. See Property, Number 19.

23. As God loves nothing outside of self, if it is not for self, so is there nothing that he loves with a lesser love than the one with which he loves himself; because he loves everything for self, and love takes the place of the end: and so he does not love the things for what they are in self. From where it comes that to God to love the soul is he puts it in a certain way in himself, equaling it to self; and so he loves the soul in self and with self, with the same love with which he loves himself, for this reason the soul in each virtuous work merits the love of God; because put in this grace and in this eminence it deserves the same God in each work. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 24)

24. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 9.

25. See Union, Number 56.

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

26. Taulere: It is not permitted for he who loves truly, to seek pleasure or delight in the interior spiritual sweetness, even though that seems licit for the imperfect and beginner servants of God; but for the perfect not at all; For it is not allowed in any way for pure love, to seek for the love of itself comfort, sweetness, taste of sensory devotion, and a favorable success in all the exercises of devotion: for that would be to put one's trust more in the gifts of God than in God himself. – (Sermon 25 on the 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Trinity) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 3)

27. See Non-Desire, Number 22.

28. St. Thomas: See Non-Desire, Number 23.

29. Albert the Great: Our charity will be perfect, when our love, all our desire, all our study, all our effort, finally all our thought, all we see, say and hope, is God. –

May we also be united to him in perpetual and inseparable love (affection), which is namely so united, that all that we hope for, all that we hear, say and pray for is God. (*On the Attachment to God*, Chapter 13) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 14, Section 4)

30. St. Augustine: Explaining these words of St. Matthew [*Matthew 22:37 - Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (KJV)*] You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.

To love God with all your heart is to command you to give all your thoughts; with all your soul, to give all your life; with all your mind to give all your understanding to him from whom you received what you give. He has therefore left no part of our life which should remain empty, and make room so that it wants to enjoy some other thing; but that all the rest which is presented to the spirit in order to be love, whether ravished and carried away there where all impulsiveness is carried from the affection (love): for man is truly good only when his whole life tends toward the immutable good. (*On Christian Doctrine*, Book 1, Chapter 22) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the*, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 3)

31. O beautiful statue, [*This comparison is admirable for expressing pure love without interest.*] tell me, why are you there on that nook? Because, it would answer, my master places me there. But why do you stay there without doing anything? Because my master did not place me there so that I might do something, but only so that I may be immobile there. But poor statue, what use does he make of you to be there as such? Ah God, it would answer [Will of God, Number 34] I am not here for my interest and service, but to obey the will of my Lord and sculptor, and that is enough for me. Now tell me statue, I beg of you, you do not see your master, how do you take contentment in contenting with him? No indeed, I do not see him; for I have eyes not to see, like I have ears not to hear, and feet not to walk: but I am too happy to know that my dear master sees me here, and takes pleasure in seeing me here. But would you not like movement in order to approach the worker who made you, and perform some greater service for him? Without deny it would deny that, and would protest that it would not like to do anything, except if its master wanted it too. And what then! Do you not long for anything else, except to be an immobile statue within this hollow nook? Certainly not, would this wise statue finally say, I want to be nothing except a statue, and always within this nook, as long as my sculptor will want it so, contenting myself with being here, and so, since it is the contentment of him whom I belong to, and by whom I am what I am. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 11)

32. Until now says St. Paul [*I Corinthians 4:11, 13 – (11) Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; (13) Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. (KJV)*] we are hungry and thirsty, naked and slapped and vagabond: we are made like the filth of this world and like the off scouring or peel of everyone; as if he were saying; We are so abject, that if the world is a palace, we are considered to the off scouring of it. Who has reduced them to the state except love? It was love, which flung St. Francis naked before his Bishop, and made him die naked on the earth: it was love, which made him a beggar all his life. It was love, which sent the great Francis Xavier poor, indigent, torn up here and there among the Indians and the Japanese. –

Do not pay attention to my complexion, says the Holy Sulanite, for I am brown, it is true, in that my Beloved who is my Sun, cast the rays of his love on me, rays which enlighten by their lights, but which by their ardor made me sun burnt and blackish, touching me with their splendor, they took away my color. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 15)

33. Love made the interior torments of this great lover St. Francis pass to the exterior, and hurt his body with the same spear of pain, with which his heart had been wounded. But to make the openings in the flesh through the outside, love which was inside could not simply do it; that is why the ardent Seraphim coming to help, hurled rays of such a penetrating charity, that on the outside it actually made the wounds of the Crucifix in the flesh. – In order to show completely the incomparable abundance of the love of St. Francis, the Seraphim came to him to cut and hurt, so that one knew that these wounds were wounds of the love of Heaven. O true God, what loving pains and painful love! For not only then, but all the rest of his life, this poor Saint always went about dragging and languishing as if sick with love.

St. Phillip de Neri, eighty years old had such an inflammation of his heart for divine love, that the heat having made place for itself on the sides, widened them, and broke the fourth and fifth ones. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 15)

34. See Indifference, Number 4.

35. O how much more blessed is the heart, which loves God without any pleasure, than the one that it takes to please God! For what pleasure can one ever have purer and more perfect than the one that one takes in the pleasure of the Divinity? Nevertheless this pleasure to please God is not properly divine love, but only a fruit of this love, which can be separated from it just, like a lemon from a lemon tree. For, as I said, our musician [See Indifference, Number 3] always sang without drawing any pleasure from his singing, since deafness prevented him from doing so; and often he sang without even having the pleasure of pleasing his Prince. –

While O God, I see your gentle face, which gives evidence of recognizing the song of my love, alas, may I be consoled! For is there any pleasure which equals the pleasure of pleasing one's God? But when you draw back your eyes from me, and I no longer see the satisfaction that you take in my canticle; true God, my soul is in great pain! But without however ceasing to love you faithfully, and without ceasing to continually sing the hymn of his affection (love), not for any pleasure that it finds there, for it does not have any, but sing for the pure love of your will. (*On the Love of God*, Book 9, Chapter 11)

36. See Purification, Number 68.

37. See Vocal Prayer, Number 14.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

38. It is in that the will, which is all the treasure of man, lovingly sacrifices all its empire to its infinite Majesty over all feelings; and this renounced love always doing its best, is often more agreeable to God, than a love entirely liquefied and highly exalted. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 16)

39. The love where there is reason to love, is not love; in that is self sufficient, in order to pull and ravish all the subject that it animates and agitates in unity of spirit, without the help and the assistance of rays and reflections. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 16)

40. Some very holy Mystics very full with this infinite love, which we spoke about in this whole Treatise, told wonders about it; -- so that they seem to have to embrace and melt all the minds, which read them, in the immense fire of this infinite love. They say, and it is true that a single drop [See Communication, Section 2, Number 3, and St. Catherine of Genes' *Life*, Chapter 36] of this love spilled into Hell would annihilate it and change it into a Paradise. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 21)

41. So that this love is not a half love, and it is wholly and totally in self, it is a great wonder that among so many people, who are solicited to love such a Lover and such a Love, there are found so few, who are wholly and totally lost in all the same love, in order to remain so united in his depths and his infinite spirit, that they are only one same thing with him and in him. For, o my Love, whoever has a goodness and an entire will to be in love with you, the love itself will further it on your part, and will do it so perfectly and so consistently, that he will remain unshakably in the acts of his good purpose. --

What amazes me a lot, o my Love and my life is to see that the poor men need so many reasonings and persuasion in order to love. -- They do not love you, because they do not know you; and they neither love nor know you, because they do not stop to look for the true good that you are, particularly to souls touched and ravished by your love. (Contemplation, Number 8)

42. O my Love and my life, that the infinite fertility of your love is industrious, which knew how to invent such proper means to steal from self every spirit, which finds itself capable of that! Ah, what extremities can one imagine to be more distant than God and man? Nevertheless there they are united together by the force of your divine love. It is he who did this ravishing feat for self and for his creature, not ceasing to act in it, in order to change it into you, and so that no longer living in it, you live there alone, o my Love and my dear life. --

However although our banquet is so delicious starting with this life, it is nevertheless mixed with bitterness and afflictions, and your love requires it thus on its part and on ours. --

The soul, o my Love, which is faithful to you, lives only to love, and loves only to infinitely and eternally glorify love. Its humility is heroic, without nevertheless knowing that it is humble. It only knows how to love ardently and without respite, in a very naked and very essential manner. The love thinks only about what it loves, and speaks only about what it loves. --

Love then, o men, him who has eternally loved you. -- The love of a God demands a reciprocal love: and the exterior works give almost no glory or pleasure to God, if they are not enlivened by a pure free love of every obstacle. (Contemplation, Number 17)

43. I still say, o my Love and my life that these truths, that you make me know, assuming a naked and essential love, whoever is only in the loving action, he overlooks the true passive love. He finds himself in the truth as if completely ravished in you by his loving action; but when it is a question of suffering nakedly and simply in spirit, in naked and essential love, that beats him down and throws him outside of you; because then he has neither the heart nor the strength to produce his affections, or to die and endure this trial so contrary to his taste. --

The virtues are in truth the body of this exercise; but its soul is the naked love, always renounced and always dying, even when there is more ease to its union; and it's very simple and very naked spirit separated from the sensory

in its very simple force. So that he who is raised to this state of love, always contemplates your Divinity in love [*That is to say, above all perceived love.*] over love, in purity of spirit beyond every sentient species.

The more essential love is, the more it is spirit; the more spirit it is, the more abstract it is; and the more truly abstract it is, the more pleased it is in suffering and desire it more. It leaves sensory taste to children, and holds back for self the true strength; the spirit and its eternal works, in vivid imitation of its dear Husband that you are. Such a soul has more happiness in the loving sufferings that one can imagine, and the more sufferings are presented to it, the greater also is its happiness. I am certain that those who are of a lesser flight than this, although holy and spiritual enough, do not know what I am saying. (Contemplation, Number 22)

SECTION 50  
PURIFICATION, TESTING (TRIALS)

Night of the Senses and of the spirit.

SHORT METHOD

To [*I am obliged to take up this whole Chapter again because of its importance.*] unite two things as opposite as are the purity of God, and the impurity of the creature; the simplicity of God, and the multiplicity of man; God must operate singularly. For that can never be done by the effort of the creature, since two things cannot be united, if they do not have similarity and relation between them: just as an impure metal will never be alloyed with a very pure and refined gold. (Chapter 24, Number 2)

What does God therefore do? He sends his own Wisdom before him, like the fire will be sent to the earth, to consume with its activity everything impure that there is. The fire consumes all things, and nothing resists its activity. It is the same way with Wisdom; it consumes every impurity in the creature in order to dispose it to the divine union.

This impurity so opposed to the union is [*Both have been seen in the articles Acts and Property.*] property and activity. Property; because it is the source of real impurity, which can never be alloyed to essential purity; just as the rays can certainly touch mud, but not be united to it. Activity; because God being in an infinite repose, it must, so that the soul can be united to him, share in his repose; without which there cannot be any union, because of the dissimilarity; since in order to unite two things they must be in a proportioned repose.

It is for this reason that the soul arrives at the divine union only by the repose of its will: and it cannot be united to God, unless it is in a central repose and in the purity [*This has also been seen in the articles: Acts, Center of the Soul, and Creation.*] of its creation. (Chapter 24, Number 3)

To purify the soul, God makes use of Wisdom, like one uses fire to purify gold. It is certain that gold can be purified only by fire, which little by little consumes everything of the earth and foreign in it, and separates it from the gold. For gold to be used, it is not enough that the earth be changed into gold: in addition it is necessary that the fire melt and dissolve it, in order to draw out from its substance everything from the earth and foreign which remains in it; and this gold is put in the fire so much and so many times, that it loses every impurity and every disposition to be able to be purified.

The goldsmith no longer able to find any thing mixed in it, because he has come to its perfect purity and simplicity, the fire can no longer act on this gold [*That means in order to purify it of its former stains, as one has seen that the same justice which purifies the soul, beautifies it. (See the article Property above.) For one must reason about the purification of this life like about Purgatory. The difference is, that when the soul of purgatory is perfectly purified, as it enters into heaven, it can no longer contract new impurities, or be dirtied exteriorly by the commerce of the creatures: It is not the same with the soul here, which still commits new imperfections, which though exterior and without any correspondence with the depths, do not fail to dirty it exteriorly. It is slight superficial filth caused by some interior vivacity, or even by purely natural faults, which not having been corrected in the time when the light was given for that, as they are not either voluntary or considerable, God does not fail to advance the soul, and the soul not having employed the light, which was given to it in order to be corrected in the time when it could make use of it, God removes it from it, because it will hold it back in the following, and so it therefore preserves these natural faults with an extremely great grace. And these faults always bring about small exterior clouds: as one sees a very fine and very pure gold which cannot be more in its substance in the fire, because it has acquired the degree of twenty-four carats that is said to be its degree of purity, which does not fail to be dirtied on the outside, and to need to be put in the fire to get back its first sparkle. But you will notice; please, that it is only thrown in there for an instant, and it is pulled out so brilliant that it dazzles: it no longer needs these long and ardent fires that were necessary to purify its substance. It is the same with this soul: it contracts impurities, which are so superficial, that just an instant purifies them, without often the soul even taking notice of its purification. I do not doubt that if the soul came to relax, perhaps these faults being trust into it, and winning the powers would cause it much damage: that is why there is no time when the soul must leave this gentle dependence on God, his love, where constantly remaining exposed to his divine eyes he always keeps it pure, purifying it once again, if it is necessary. There is a figure of what I advanced in the Holy Scripture in the Book of Judges, (See the Explanation of Judges 1:17, 27) where the people of Israel when they were armed not having destroyed all the enemies of the Lord, and having let them live with them, though in a subjugated manner, in the following these same enemies were always new stumbling blocks to them, and once again the reason for falls: there were some of these peoples who were entirely exterminated. Happy are those who are not spared in the time of death and purification, for they rest in assurance!]; and it could be there a century and not be more pure, and not diminish. Then it is appropriate to do the most excellent works.*

And if this gold is impure in the following part, I say that it is from dirtiness newly contracted by the commerce with foreign bodies. But there is this difference, which is that this impurity [*These people act so simply and so freely, that even though their exterior has nothing unworthy of the Majesty of him who lives in them, they are nevertheless far removed from this exterior composition, which comes from a continual attention to oneself.*] is only superficial, and

does not prevent him from being used: whereas the other impurity was hidden in the depths, and identified with his nature. However the people who are not known there, seeing purified gold covered with dross (filth) on the outside, will set less store by that than by coarse very impure gold, whose outside is polished. (Chapter 24, Number 4)

Moreover, you will notice, that the gold of a degree of inferior purity, cannot be alloyed with that of a degree of superior purity. It would be necessary for the one to acquire the impurity of the other; or that they one shares in the purity of that one. To put purified gold with coarse gold is something the goldsmith will never do. What will he then do? He will with fire lose all the earthly mixture of this gold, in order to be able to alloy it to the purity of the first one. And is what is said in St. Paul: *[I Corinthians 3:13, 15 – (13) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. (KJV)]* our works will be tested by the fire, so that what is combustible may be burned. It is added, that the person whose works are found to be suitable to being burned, will be saved; but as through the fire. That means, that they are received works which are set aside; but so that he who did them may be as pure, they must pass through the fire, so that property may be removed from it; and it is in this same sense that God will examine and *[Psalms 24:3 – (Douay - Neither let my enemies laugh at me: for none of them that wait on thee shall be confounded.) (or 25:3 KJV - Dea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.)]* judge our just acts; because *[Romans 3:20, 22 – (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (22) Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: (KJV)]* man will never be sanctified by obedience to the law; but by the justice of the faith which comes from God.

That asked I say, so that man may be united to his God, Wisdom accompanied by divine Justice, like a merciless and devouring fire, must remove from the soul everything that it has of property, worldly, carnal and of its own activity: and that having removed all that from the soul, he unites himself to it.

Which is never done by the industry of the creature; on the contrary it regretfully endures it: because as I said, man loves his property so much, and he fears his destruction so much, that if God did not do it himself and with authority, man would never consent to it. (Chapter 24, Numbers 5-6)

To that I will be answered, that God never takes away man's freedom, and that thus he can always resist God: from which it follows that I must not say, that God acts absolutely and without the consent of man.

I am explaining myself, and I say, that it is then enough for him to give a passive consent, so that he has entire and full freedom; because having given himself to God since the beginning of his path, so that he might do with him and in him all that he would like, he gave starting then an active and general consent for everything God would do. But when God destroys, burns and *[To understand this, it is best to pay attention, that when the unction of grace is strongly tasted and perceived by the soul, its faults appear as if wiped away; but when God purifies, when he thrusts the virtues into the soul, the same virtues seemed deadened on the outside and the natural faults are seen.]*

*It seems to me that the impression of winter on plants is a beautiful and true symbol of that. When winter approaches, the trees slowly lose their leaves; and this clothing of shining green slowly changes its color, becomes yellow, and finally dies and falls, so that the trees appear completely stripped. The loss of their leaves uncovered all the faults of their barks that had not been noticed before: these are not new faults that these trees acquired, they are the same one; but this dress of greenery undressed them in the eyes of men. They are therefore stripped of their leaves, like man appears to be of virtues in the time of his purification. But just as the tree by preserving its sap, preserves the principle of its leaves; so is the soul not stripped of the essence of virtue, or of what it has which is real, but certainly of easy use and its sparkle; so that man thus naked and stripped, appears in the eyes of other men, and in his own eyes, with all the natural faults, covered before with cloths of a sensitive grace. All winter long all the trees appear dead, and are not so in the least; on the contrary winter is what saves them. For what does winter do? It contracts them so that the sap does not spill out, and so that they employ their strength to grow new roots, to extend and nourish the ones which are already sprouted, and finally to always thrust them further into the earth. One can say that then the more the tree appears dead in its misfortune, which are its leaves: (I do not know if this term will be appropriate, but I hope for charity from those who want to examine me, will they make up for the shortcomings of my expressions:) this tree I say, which appears dead in its misfortune, has never been more alive in its principle; and it is during the winter that the source and the principle of its life is established: whereas in the other seasons it employs all its sap in decorating and embellishing itself, and during this whole time the roots are only weakened. It is completely the same with the steward of the grace on the souls. God removes that which is accidental in virtue, in order to feed the principle of it with the essence of these virtues, which are practiced then, though in a hidden way, like humility, pure love, entire abandon, the scorn for oneself, and the rest. It is therefore in this way that the operation of God seems to dirty the outsides, not that it dirties them truly, but it removes that which was covering the dirtiness, in order to better cure it by exposing it to the eyes of all.*

*Another comparison comes to me: I do not know if I made use of it in some other passage. It is that of wood (see Below, Number 35) when it is put in the fire. Before the fire changes the wood, it chases away everything, which is opposite to it. Notice, please, that there are not different fires, which purify and transform: the fire does not change its operation, whether it purifies the wood or transforms it into self. The operation of the fire is always the same, which is*



to heat, burn, light up; and if we see it do so many different operations, it is only in relation to the subject which is present to it: because for it, it is always the same, always one in it, although with an infinity of operations, which are nothing to its constitution, which can never be altered or changed: what appears to be a change in the fire, is only an accident which does not come from the cause, but from the reasons which are presented to it. For the fire acts in all the subjects, and in relation to what they are in themselves and in relation to what it is in self: in relation to what they are, it acts to remove the dissimilarities and contrariness from them: and in relation to what it is, it communicates to them, as it purifies them of their clashes according to what they are, its heat and its light. It is the same with the operations of God. He is always himself, always equals to self in all things. He has only a single and unique operation over all the subjects, which is to conform them to himself; and if he acts so differently in each of us, that comes from ourselves.

The goal of the operations of God is therefore to conform to self all the subjects appropriate for that, and to change them into self. He must therefore begin with removing from them and pushing to the outside, everything they have which is opposed to the end for which he destines them, which is, to change them into self; as one sees that the fire begins by pushing the first clash, which is its humidity, outside the wood: then little by little he removes all the others which are the qualities of the wood, its color, its weight. And when that is performed by the activity of the fire, as the purification is done in the soul by the activity of Wisdom, this operation pushing to the outside all the contrariness with which it purifies the inside, the outside appears more defective then it was before. One must nevertheless notice that as the wood enclosed these clashes in self, and that this is not dirtiness, even though that appeared such to those who being ignorant of the properties of the fire, would see only this single operation on the wood: also the faults and miseries which the soul finds itself filled with, and which are so much pain to it, are not new impurities that it acquires, but the same that it had, but that it did not perceive: because not being so close to God, or exposed to his purifying eyes, that did not appear: as one does not distinguish the clashes which are in the wood, that when the fire beings to act on it and heat it. And as it is obvious, that one is not advised to put new dampness into the wood, so that it may become purer by the fire, and that it is evident that nothing is added to its dampness, that on the contrary it is prepared to be put in the fire by letting it dry after it is cut; also is this foolishness and a malicious impertinence to say, that the exterior must be dirtied in order to purify the inside. Those who say these things, or who do not want to see the truth, or who say it maliciously: and it is an invention of the Devil to move one away from prayer. For is it not true that if you put new impurities and dampness on the wood, not only will the fire not change it into self, but even little by little, if you put a dampness stronger than the heat of the fire, it will extinguish the fire completely; and if the dampness that you add does not exceed the force of the fire, the same fire will always be employed in destroying the new clashes, and will never change the wood into self. Far from adding new clashes one must, in order to be purified, little by little let the obstacles which are in us, be destroyed, by grace, so that grace after having overcome them little by little, according to the strength of the subject, God finding the subject disposed, finally changes it into self.

It is the whole steward of the grace of purification, and every person who will have passed there, will see that I am telling the truth. I pray God to enlighten my eyes, in order to show this extreme difference; and may the spite of the enemy, who sowed much tares with the good seed, not be the reason why one mixed them up, and may the truth be extracted in order to destroy the lies. If I seek my own interest in that, I pray him whose eyes I am writing under, to confuse my error and my malice, and to raise his truth when it is at the expense of my life.] purifies, the soul does not see that this is advantageous to it: it believes the opposite rather: and just as in the beginning the fire seems to dirty the gold, so does this operation seem to strip the soul of its purity. So that if then an active and explicit consent were necessary, the soul would be pained to give it, and very often, it would not give it. All that it does is to hold itself in passive consent, enduring with its best this operation that it cannot and does not want to prevent.

God therefore purifies this soul of all its own distinct, perceived and multiplied operations, which make up a very great difference, so much that finally he makes it little by little conform to him, and then uniform; raising the passive capacity of the creature, enlarging and enabling it, though in a hidden and unknown way; that is why it is called mystic. But the soul must passively concur with all these operations.

It is true that before coming there, it must act more in the beginning; then as the operation of God becomes stronger, the soul must little by little and successively yield to it [Which happens as the subject is more disposed: as the dampness of the wood yields little by little to the heat of the fire, and as the more the fire overcomes the dampness in this wood, its heat is increased in the same wood, and all the contrariness comes out of it; until the fire, by dint of overcoming this contrariness, converts the wood into self.], until he absorbs it completely. But that lasts [These words "a long time" shows that even though one has said that this path is short, one does not pretend to say that one is perfect at first.] for a long time. (Numbers 7-8)

It is a strange thing, that not ignoring that we are created only for that, and every soul which does not, in this life, reach the divine union and the purity of our creation, must burn in Purgatory for a long time in order to acquire this [I press so strongly for purity and purification: how can one find that I am saying the opposite? I admit that these books deserve to be explained, and that those who printed them must demand that it be so: but as it was not then of mention with all this dissoluteness, they did not have the thought, any more than me, of the bad turn that they were given. If these Sirs wanted to take the time to read the treatise on Purgatory (imprinted in the Opuscles of the Author), they would see how the purification is done, and that they are the operations of God in the soul.] purity, one cannot

nevertheless endure God leading us there starting with this life. As if what must make the perfection of the glory; had to cause evil and imperfection in this mortal life. (Chapter 24, Numbers 8 & 10)

### CANTICLE

As the greatest graces of God always tend toward deeper knowledge of what we are; and they would not be his if they did not give, according to their degree, a certain experience of this misery of the creature; this soul hardly comes out of the cellars of its Husband; it finds itself black. What is your blackness, o incomparable Mistress? Say it to us? I am black it says; because in favor of my divine Sun. I perceive a quantity of faults that I had overlooked up to the present: I am black because I am not purified of my property.

But however I do not fail to be beautiful and beautiful like the tents of Cedar; because this experimental knowledge of what I am pleases my Husband extremely. –

My apparent blackness hides the greatness of the operations of God in my soul.

I am still black because of the crosses and the persecutions, which come to me from the outside: but I am beautiful like the pavilions of Solomon; since the crosses and this blackness makes me like him.

I am black because weaknesses [*Note weaknesses and not sins.*] appear on my exterior; but I am beautiful, because on the inside I am free from malice. (Chapter 1, Verse 4)

Why does the Wife ask to not be looked at in her blackness? It is that [*Note that what the blackness and the impurity which I wanted to speak about, are explained here.*] the soul beginning to enter into the state of faith and of the stripping of the sensory graces, little by little it loses this gentle rigor, which made it practice the good with ease, and which made it completely beautiful on the outside. And no longer being able to quit these first practices, because God wants something else from it, it seems that it has fallen back into its natural state.

That appears this way to those who are not enlightened. That is why it says: I beseech you, you my companions, who [*Note, the beginners are pre-cautioned here.*] have not yet arrived so far into the interior, you who are only in the first steps of the spiritual life, do not judge me by the brown color that I wear on the outside, or by all my [*Faults and not sins.*] exterior faults, either real, or apparent: for that does not come, like to the beginning souls, from a lack of love and courage: but it is that my divine Sun by its continual ardent and burning glances, discolored me. It took away any natural color from me, leaving me only the color that its ardor wants to give me. It is the force of love, which dries my skin and [*As the fire blackens the wood before lighting it up. Note: it is the approach of the fire, which blackens the wood, and the moving away from the fire. The wood can be blackened by the dampness: but this blackness puts it in a greater opposition to be burned; and it even becomes so to such a point that it never burns. Such is the blackness of those who move themselves away from my God, of these adulterous souls which move themselves away from you (Psalms 72:27 Douay – “For behold they that go far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that are disloyal to thee.” [or 73:27 KJV – “**For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee**”].); they also perish: but not my Wife, who is made brown by the excess of love which wants to consume it in self, because it chases away all contrariness from it.] browns it; and not the moving away from love. This black is an advancement; and not a shortcoming: but it is an advancement that you must not consider, you who are still young and too tender to imitate it; because the blackness that you would give yourself, would be a fault: it must come, in order to be good, only from the Sun of Justice, which for its glory, and for the greatest good of the soul, eats and devours this color bursting on the outside, which blinds it, although it makes the soul admirable for the others, to the detriment of the glory of the Husband.*

My brothers seeing me black in this way, wanted to oblige me to take up the active life again, and to keep the outside, without applying myself to kill the passions on the inside: for a long time I fought with them: but finally not being able to resist them, I did what they wanted: and [*Wrong that is done to the souls of this state to make them take up the active life again. The Blessed John of the Cross proved it in so many passages that I already cited from him. (See Acts, Numbers 7-8 & 10, Divine Motion, Numbers 12 & 14, Prayer, Section 1, Number 12 & Section 2, Number 19)]*] by applying myself on the outside, to things, which are foreign to me, I did not take care of my vineyard, which is my depths, where my God lives. That is my only concern, and the only vineyard that I must take care of: and when I did not take care of mine, when I was not attentive to my God, I took care of the others still less. This is the torment that is usually done to the souls, when one sees that the great occupation of the inside causes the outside ones to be neglected in some way; and because of this the soul completely enclosed on the inside, can no longer apply itself to certain small faults that the Husband will correct at another time. (Chapter 1, Verse 5)

Here is the order of charity that God puts in this soul; his love has become [*Please note what state my Wife is in, entering into the trials; and how moved away it is from what is imputed to it.*] perfectly chaste. All the creatures are nothing to it; it wants them all for its God, and does not want any for self. O may this order of charity give strength for the terrible states that it will be necessary to pass in the next part! But it cannot be tasted or known by those who are not there; for not having yet drunk of this wine of the Husband. (Chapter 2, Verse 4)

Hardly [In order to understand this, one must pay attention that before the last trials, that the Blessed John of the Cross calls Night of the Spirit, God after the night of senses or of the first purification, is communicated to the soul in a way much more perfect than it had even been done; just as it is marked in the Canticle. But the more pure and sublime this favor is, the more the absence of the Husband and the purification, which follows, becomes terrible: For it is shown only in order to flee with more rigor. One must also pay attention to that we said, that what makes the trials more terrible in this absence of the Husband joined with experience of its miseries, with the frightening interior pains, with the exterior persecutions by men and by devils: all that joined together, is something so terrible, that whoever has not felt it will never image it. The absence of the Husband is certainly called night and death, because it is the light and the life of the soul: and as the night in nature makes them frightening, much more terrible and full of horror to themselves; also in the night of the spirit everything appears all the more horrible, because the night is more somber, and one no longer hopes to see again the divine Son, which must bring back the day into our souls.] had this Mistress tasted the sweetness of this union, than the Husband disappeared completely. Seeing therefore such a quick flight, it compares it to a roebuck and to a doe, because of the lightness and quickness of their running: and complaining lovingly about him after such a strange abandonment, when it believes him to be far, it sees him quite close. He had only hidden himself in order to test its faith and confidence; however he does not take away its glances above; because he protects it more particularly than ever, being more united to it by the new alliance that he just made, that he had not done up until then. But even though he watches it incessantly, it does not always see him: it only catches glimpses of him at certain moments; so that it cannot ignore this glance, and so that it may one day teach it to the others.

One must notice that the Husband is standing, because it is no longer time to rest or remain seated; but to run, He is standing, as if ready to walk. (Chapter 2, Verse 9)

One must know that there are two winters: the one on the outside, and the one on the inside; and that the two are reciprocally opposite. When the winter is on the outside, summer is on the inside, which brings the soul to thrust itself more into self, by a effect of grace which operates a profound recollection: and when it is winter on the inside, there is a summer on the outside, which obliges the soul to come outside itself, by the widening which is caused by a more extended grace of abandon. The winter which the Husband is speaking about here, saying that it has already passed, is the exterior winter, during which the soul could be iced by the rigor of the cold, dirtied by the rains, and overwhelmed under the storms and the snows of sins and imperfection, which are easily acquired by commerce with creatures. The soul which has found the center, has been so strengthened, that there is nothing more to fear for it on the outside: all the rains are wiped away; and unless there was the blackest infidelity there ever was, it would be impossible for it to take [Note that this soul is then far removed from going to seek illicit pleasures, since it can no longer enjoy itself in the innocent pleasures. What it has is a certain candor and innocence that cannot be expressed and which I spoke about. (See the Note on Short Method, Chapter 24, Number 1, and in the article Property above.)] any pleasure in the things on the outside.

Moreover this manner of speaking, the winter has already passed, means, that as the winter deadens all the exterior things; just as for this soul, death has passed onto all the exterior things, in that there is no longer anything which can satisfy it. If something still appears there, it is a renewal of innocence, which has none of the former malignity.

The rains of winter have also passed; It can go forth without fearing winter any longer, and with this advantage, that winter has destroyed and killed that which was formerly living for it, and which would have killed it: in the way that the rigors of winter purge the earth of insects. (Chapter 2, Verse 11)

In the Sanctuary that God erects in his Mistress, there are even columns of silver, which are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, established on divine grace, which is like pure and sparkling silver, which takes the place of matter and foundation. The wayside altar is of gold; for a soul, which deserves to serve, as a throne and royal bed for Jesus Christ, must no longer have any other support than God alone; and it must be entirely stripped of every created support. The ascent is all of purple; for if [Acts 14:21 & 2 Timothy 2:12 Douay-Rheims Version (or Acts 14:22 KJV – “*Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* 2 Timothy 2:12 – “*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*”] one can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven only through many afflictions; and if one can reign with Jesus Christ only after having suffered with him, that [The trials and sufferings are certainly more terrible in the people well interior and united to God, than in the others; the others do not even understand these terrible trials.] goes even further for those who are called to the first places of the interior Kingdom, and for the souls which starting in this life must be honored with the wedding with the heavenly Husband; for the common run of Christians, which certainly part from this world in the path of salvation, but laden with many debts and imperfections. It is unbelievable how many crosses, (opprobriums - public disgrace, ill fame, contempt, reproach) and reversals these chosen souls must devour.

Finally all the inside is filled with charity, since these living thrones of the most high being full of love, are also decorated with all the fruits and ornaments of love, which are [Note that my Wife is decorated with virtues and good works, which are the fruits of the Holy Spirit; this is related to the Enigma of the Blessed John of the Cross, put in front of his Works.] good merits, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the practice of the most pure and most solid virtues.

This is to what you are called, o daughters of Jerusalem, interior Wives; souls of prayer (interior prayer). (Chapter 3, Verse 10)

Until the day of the new life, that you must receive in my Father, begins to appear; and until the shadows which keep you in the darkness of the most naked faith, are lowered and dissipated, I will go to the mountain of myrrh; because you will no longer find me but in bitterness and the cross. It will nevertheless be for me a mountain of a certain scent; since the scent of your sufferings will climb toward me like incense; and it will be through them that I will take my repose in you. (Chapter 4, Verse 6)

The Wife has almost no more way to make in order to be united to you with an immortal knot; and when it appears to approach your bed, it is pushed back by sixty strong men. Is there not cruelty in attracting it so strongly, though with so much gentleness, in order to possess a good that it values more than a thousand lives; and when it is near its possession, to rebuke it so roughly? O God, you invite, you call and you give the disposition of the state, before giving the state; like one gives a taste of an exquisite liquid, to make it more desired. O what you make this soul suffer by the delay of what you promise it. –

Come also from the dens of lions and the mountains of leopards: for it will only be through the most cruel [*Note that sufferings and persecutions are always spoken about.*] persecutions by men and devils, like so many ferocious beasts, that you will be able to arrive at such a divine state. It is time to more than ever raise yourself above all that, since you are ready to be crowned as my Wife. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

What hurts me and charmed me in you is that all your misfortunes, all your disgraces and your most extreme displeasures, all that has not brought you to withdraw your eye from over me, in order to look at yourself in the face. You did not even look at the [*These injuries are, like I said: within the apparent abandonment by the Husband, which is the more terrible pain to the soul; and to be exteriorly delivered to the spite of men and devils. The preceding verse shows, that the persecution by men and devils alone is spoken about here.*] injuries that I made you give, or the ones that I gave to you myself, no more than if they had not touched you: because your pure and honest love, which kept you applied uniquely to me, did not allow you to look at yourself, or your own interests; but only to look me in the face with love, just as your sovereign Object.

But alas! Will this afflicted Mistress say, how would I have looked at you, since I do not know where you are? She does not know that her glance has become so purified, that being always direct and without reflection, she does not know her glance, and is not aware that she does not stop seeing. Moreover, as soon as one can no longer see oneself and forget [*One must notice, that in all the time that the Husband appears absent, even with that, my Wife is not occupied with herself, or with the creatures: on the contrary, she is more removed from that than ever: she believes she has lost the presence of her Beloved; and is not the continual pain of this apparent loss a continual presence?*], as well as all the creatures, it is necessary that one looks at God: and it is on him that the interior [*It is necessary to always preserve this interior glance into God, though in an imperceptible: so does my Wife also not forget her Husband. Note please, that it is always said, that the thoughtlessness of my Wife about herself, comes only from the continual application that she has to her God; so she is certainly removed from the error of those that forget him in order to offend him with impunity.*] glance is fixed.

The other wound that you gave me is, says the Husband again, by the union of your well-planted hair. That marks clearly enough that the affections of the Mistress have been reunited in God alone, and that she has lost all her will in God's.

So that the surrender of her whole self to the will of God, by the loss of all self will, and the honesty with which she applies herself to God, without making any returns back on herself, are the two arrows which injured the heart of her Husband. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

I [*I am not repeating this verse, having explained it amply in Property. I also explained (in the same Article) the guards of the city who beat and injured it (verse 7). Even though I am not repeating all these verses here; in the Authorities I will not fail to write that is relevant to them, if I find something about that.*] washed my feet how will I dirty them? (Chapter 5, Verse 3)

True love has no eyes for looking at itself. This afflicted Mistress forgets her injuries, although they are still bleeding: she no longer remembers her loss: she does not even speak about it: she thinks only [*One must notice that the grace the soul neglects itself, the more it is occupied with God. It is not neglect cause by indolence, but by the force of love. This soul seeks God continually, as I pointed out in this passage of the Explanation of the Canticle Chapter 1, Verse 3; Seek the Lord, seek his face constantly. (Psalms 104:4 Douay "Seek ye the lord, and be strengthened: seek his face evermore." {or 105:4 KJV – "Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore."}) Pure love disrobes the soul of every rue other than that of its divine Object. This soul never, not even for an instant, desists from its search; whereas these creatures, which give themselves up to, all evils forget him with care, so that he does not reproach them for their dissoluteness. My Wife neglects herself and all the creatures, in order to think only about God: these wretched people forget God in order to think only about satisfying themselves.*] about him that she loves, and she looks for him with all the more force, because she finds more obstacles of possession to him. She addresses herself to interior souls, and tells them: O you, to whom without doubt my Beloved uncovers (reveals) himself, I beseech you by himself, to tell him, that I am languishing with love for him. What! O most beautiful of women, do you not want him to be spoken to about your injuries, rather than him being recounted what you suffered in looking for him? No, no, answers

this generous soul, I am too rewarded for the bad things which have happened to me, since I suffered them for him; and I prefer them to the greatest goods. Say only one thing to my Beloved; which is that I am languishing with love for him. The would that his love has made in the bottom of my heart is so sharp, that I am insensitive to all the exterior pains; I dare to say that even *[All the pains are nothing in comparison to the wound of love.]* in comparison to that, they are refreshments to me. (Chapter 5, Verse 8)

#### AUTHORITIES

One cannot help but sometimes report passages, which have already been cited, because the passage may contain several ideas.

#### ST. DENNIS

1. One can say like the Angel, through whom the purification of the Prophet *[Isaiah 6: 6-7 – Douay “And one of the seraphims flew to me, and in his hand was a live coal, which he had taken with the tongs off the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said: Behold this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquities shall be taken away, and thy sin shall be cleansed.” (or KJV – “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”)]* was performed, giving an account of his learning and the virtue that he had to purify, to God *[Order of purification of the first cause by the second causes; and as everything is finally related to this first principle, so is he the principle and end of all purification, although he makes use of the means.]* firstly, like to the first author, and then to the Seraphim as if to his superior in the hierarchical order, and who is the highest and the prime minister of this holy function. As if this Angel had said to him with great respect and a singular modesty, for the instruction of him that he was purifying: Do not think that there is an author of the purification that I am performing in your person, other than he who is the principle itself, the cause and the creator of all things. (*Heavenly Hierarchy*, Chapter 13)

2. See Conversion, Number 2.

3. See Annihilation, Number 1.

4. See Habit, Number 1.

5. He who is clean, like the holy word says, *[John 13:10 – Douay “Jesus saith to him: He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly. And you are clean, but not all.” (or KJV “Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.”)]* no longer needs but to simply clean the ends of his feet, which is to say, that he no longer needs but to clean his extremities. So that by the cleaning, which makes him perfectly pure and clean in the very chaste state of divine likeness (Godliness), it will happen that departing through goodness in order to intervene in the things which are below him, he will not in the least be hindered by them or held back by any attachment, because he is perfect uniform *[It is this uniformity which makes up his purity. You see how this pure uniformity is preserved in the exterior commerce of the creatures, and stops one from contracting any stain.]*; and when from these things around which he will be employed, he will return toward the one, his return will be very pure, and without having acquired any stain or blemished by attachment to such things, like he who knows very well how to preserve his divine state, without losing or diminishing any of his integrity. (*Heavenly Hierarchy*, Chapter 3)

6. See Operations of Self, Number 4.

#### RUSBROCHE

7. See Non-Desire, Number 2.

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

8. It is easy to scorn the comforts of men, when God himself comforts us. But this is the effect of a great and rare virtue, to leave divine consolations as well as human ones, and to suffer in peace and for the love of God and abandonment and this *[How well said this is! Because man is accustomed to returning into his heart and finding God there, suffers strangely, when he sees himself banished and exiled from his own heart, which was his unique refuge in his desolation. This word is all the more true and expressive, because it is certain that God does not abandon our heart, when we are deprived of his sweet presence: on the contrary, he has never been there more, although hidden: it is we ourselves who are exiled and banished from our own heart, where we no longer find any refuge.]* exile from the

heart, without searching for oneself in anything, and without having the slightest thoughts if one deserves to be treated in this way. (Book 3, Chapter 9, Section 1)

9. When this heavenly gentleness is taken away from you, do not let yourself go to distrust and despondency; but wait for the return of heavenly joy with patience and humility. – This divine direction is neither stranger nor new to those, who have experience in the way of God. The ancient Prophets and the greatest Saints felt this vicissitude of trouble and peace in themselves.

So the King – prophet felt the presence of grace, when he was in the state that he describes in these terms: [Psalms 29:7-8 – Douay “*And in my abundance I said: I shall never be moved. O Lord, in thy favour, thou gavest strength to my beauty. Thou turnedst away thy face from me, and I became troubled.*” (or 30:6-7 KJV – “*And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.*”)] I said in my abundance; I will never be shaken. But as soon as grace was withdrawn from him, after having felt what he was by himself, he adds: You have turned your face away from me, and at the same time I have fallen into trouble. – That is why Job says; [Job 7:18 – (Douay – “*Thou visitest him early in the morning, and thou provest him suddenly.*”) KJV - “*And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?*”) You visit man early as the morning, and immediately you test him. –

Whether I have near me men of God or faithful friends, or fervent and religious souls, or holy books and excellent writings of piety, or that I hear the hymns and the sweet songs of the Church, I find little help and taste in all these things, when I see myself destitute of grace, and surrendered to my poverty. For me there then remains no bitter (True remedy) remedy, than patience and the entire renouncement of myself to want only what God wants. (Book 2, Chapter 9, Sections 4-6)

10. Be assured that your life must be accompanied by a continual death. The more a man dies to himself, the more he learns to live only for God. No one will be fit to understand the things of Heaven, if he is not pleased to suffer the evils of this world for Jesus Christ. (Book 2, Chapter 12, Section 14)

11. He who loves generously remains firm in temptations; he does not let himself be surprised by the artificial persuasions of his enemy. As he finds a celestial pleasure in me, when I favor him with my grace, he no longer finds anything in me, which displeases him, when I find him through droughts and sufferings. (Book 3, Chapter 6, Section 3)

#### HENRY HARPHIUS

12. God no longer being able to afflict these souls with ordinary adversities and tribulations; because they are ready for everything; he allows them to be tormented by blasphemy, callousness, hatred for God, assurance, to what it seems to them, of their own reprobation: and their torment is so great that St. Augustine and St. Bernard rightly compare it to an infernal pain.

God again adding pain upon pain, permits them to be persecuted, scorned, mocked; and allows those who in the world pass for honest people, people of probity, learning and righteousness, to regard them only as crazy or fanatic people: it is through the instigation of the Devil that they persecute them in this way, often without even knowing it, and with good intention. It is like this that Job was treated. Everything turns into poison and desolation for these poor souls: their parents, their servants, their friends, everyone they have dear to them, abandons them, or persecutes them: their anxieties, their extreme sorrows are badly interpreted, censured, disparaged; whereas upright reason and charity should excuse, admire, or even respect what in them they do not know, and favorably explain things doubtful and unknown in the world. Through all that they reach this happy death, and say with David, in the example of Jesus Christ: [Psalms 68:21 – Douay – “*In thy sight are all they that afflict me; my heart hath expected reproach and misery. And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none: and for one that would comfort me, and I found none.*” (or 69:20 KJV – “*Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.*”)] My heart waits for only shame and misery. (*Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Chapter 25)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

13. In this way all the natural inclinations, as much of the soul as of the body, are consumed one after the other: and so I know that what there is of self in us must be consumed in such a way that none of it remains, because of the malignancy of this self part, which is such and so great, that there is nothing which can vanquish, except the infinite goodness of God. If he did not consume, hide and engulf it in himself, it would be impossible for us to remove from over our shoulders this evil worse than Hell. (In her *Life*, Chapter 13)

14. This purity and cleanliness of love was ineffable, and surpassed human capacity: and this holy soul had this love in such great abundance that it could not understand [*It seems to the soul of this degree, that its love cannot be increased, although it increases each day: it is because it feels no emptiness; because God fills its passive capacity as*

*he extends it, and he extends it as he fills it up: so that the soul not feeling its emptiness, does not understand that it can contain more.]* that it could have grown more; because it was full of it, that it could not desire any more, than what kept it fully satiated.

Yet love did not fail to be careful to purge and clean this precious and elected vessel, to increase its capacity, and to fill it more and more. In such a way that it said: I always feel that small bits of imperfections are taken away from me, that this pure love draws one outside, working a lot with its penetrating and clear-sighted eyes, which uncovers the slightest and most secret imperfections, which near a lesser love would seem to be imperfections. God does this work, and man is not aware of this; because if he saw the imperfections, he would not be able to bear them. God shows him the perfection which is in the work, without showing him the imperfections which still are harmful to the work: but however he does stop removing them from him, even though they are unknown to the understanding. And if one says [*Job 15:15 – (Douay - “Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.”) or (KJV – “Behold among his saints none is unchangeable, and the heavens are not pure in his sight.”)*] that the Heavens are not clean before God, one must understand that the shortcoming of cleanliness, is made known only by a supernatural light; which without man intervening, operates in its divine way, and constantly purifies the vessel, which seems to be already perfectly purified. God does this work secretly; because if this man, who completely places himself back into the hands of God, and who wants only virtue and perfection of God, saw of what importance is the smallest imperfection before God, it would be impossible for him [*She is speaking about the perfect state.*], if he saw several of them, or even a single one, by despair have been reduced to dust. For these reasons God removes them little by little from man without him taking notice of it; and while we are in this life, his sweet goodness does nothing but remove them from us. (Chapter 18)

15. For this reason I conclude that pure love cannot endure the slightest clash, and can remain with any person, if it does remove from him all the obstacles and the hindrances, in order to remain there in perfect repose. (Chapter 20)

16. If such rectitude was not there, it would not be true and pure love; but he would be soiled with self love, which is so distanced from pure love that nothing can be more opposed to him, and the soul cannot have any repose, until the waters which come forth from it are as clear as those which come from the divine spring (source). (Chapter 21)

17. Pure love can neither endure [*This is what has been said above (Explanation of the Canticle Chapter 5, Verse 8) that the Mistress forgets all her wounds in order to think only about the wound of her love.*] nor understand, what pain or torment, either of the world, or of Hell, is: and even though it was able to feel all the pains from the devils and the damned, it could never say that these were pains; because when pain is felt, it is outside this love. True and pure love is of such great strength, that it always keeps its object attached and mobile in the love, and never [*Note never*] gives him the power to see or feel anything other than pure love. It is therefore in vain that he who wants to make him feel the things of the world works; because he remains immobile in his object like a dead body. (Chapter 23)

18. I see three methods, she said, “that God keeps when he wants to purge the creature.”

Firstly he gives it a naked love, in such a way that it can neither want nor see anything but this love, which being so naked [*The nakedness of love makes its purity.*] and so clean, shows it the slightest bits and the most subtle traits of self love: and seeing this truth, it cannot be deceived by its self part; but it reduces it into such great despair, that it does not want to give at [*This is what all the fidelity of the soul consists in, to not give any relief to the nature during the trials.*] any refreshment, either corporeal, or spiritual. So its self love is consumed little by little, being necessary for him who does not eat to die: and yet the quantity and malignancy of this self love is so great that it accompanies man almost up to the end of its life. I feel instincts consumed in me, which beforehand seemed good and perfect to me; but after they are consumed, I know and understand that they were depraved according to any spiritual and corporeal infirmity, that I do not see, and that I no longer thought I had. One must come to such a great subtlety of view that all the things which seem to be perfections are uncovered, and at the end are recognized to be imperfections, larceny and misfortunes: that which is recognized clearly in the mirror of truth, namely the pure love, in which everything which seemed to be upright, sees itself tortured and imperfect.

The second method, which pleases me more than that one, is when God gives man occupied in great pain and affliction; because that shows him how vile and abject he is: and by this view he keeps himself in very great poverty of everything which can receive some taste of flavor of good; in such a way that the self part cannot be fed by any means, and not being able to do this, it is necessary for it to be consumed, and that it finally recognize, that if God did not put his hand in there, by giving it his being, with whom he removes from it this so affliction view, never would it depart from this Hell. But after it recognized that it can hope for nothing from itself, God does it the favor to remove this view from it, and then it remains in great peace and comfort.

The third method [*In certain souls God joins together all three methods of purification, or makes them pass one after the other.*] is yet more excellent, which is, when God gives the creature a spirit so occupied in him, that neither on the inside nor on the outside it can think only about God; not being able to value or stop in anything of what is in him,

or even at his exercises and his occupations, except as much as it is necessary for the love of God. So this spirit seems to be dead to the world; because it cannot delight in anything, and does not know what it wants either in Heaven or on earth. With that he is given such poverty of spirit that he does not know what he is doing or what he had done, and he attends to nothing of what he must do, either for God, or for the world, or for himself, or for his neighbor; because God does not let him see anything which he can find himself, but always holds him back in union with him and in a gentle and agreeable confusion. [Property, Number 9] So this spirit remains rich and poor, not being able to appropriate anything or be satisfied by anything; so that it is necessary for it to be consumed and finally remain in itself. Then it finds itself again in God, where it was before, even though it did not know how it was there. (Chapter 26)

19. The soul, which loves God, is more horrified by an imperfection than by all the pain of Purgatory, even though that pain is extreme. That is why it throws itself eagerly into Purgatory having come forth from the body, seeing that this is the ordained place for it to be purged; and it seems to the soul that it finds great mercifulness. (Chapter 30)

20. It was so attached to the will of God that it took everything which happened to it from moment to moment from his hand; and this union to the divine will saved it such taste and flavor, that it shared in the felicity of the Blessed, who have no other will than that of the sovereign Goodness. This divine will [*This divine will purifies us. As all our imperfections come from that which is opposed to God; (for it impossible that God could want an imperfection, every imperfection making us dissimilar to him and opposed to his will;)* it is clear that conformity to his will, making us become uniform, and this uniformity being the way in which can be like God, the divine will conforming (adapting) our will to his, must inevitably purify it of everything which is opposed to it: the more the purifies the soul, the more it makes it consistent with itself, until it makes the soul uniform and finally changes and transforms it into self: this is the steward of grace.] is what removes every imperfection from our will. And for that it said: God wants everything better and higher that we can desire; and he looks at nothing but our spiritual usefulness. But man, because of his imperfection, does not see these things; and the more he is conformed to divine will, the more he leaves his imperfection, and approaches closer to perfection; so that [*Note, when he can no longer move himself away.*] when he can no longer move himself away from the divine will; he becomes wholly perfect, united and transformed into God; so the soul remaining in it depraved will, it remains imperfect; and approaching God's will, it becomes perfect. O blessed is the soul. (See Abandon, Number 10) (Chapter 31)

21. See Annihilation, Numbers 14-15.

22. Since the time when love took over the care and the management of all things in me, never has it left me; so that since this time [*She is saying that she has never again taken over the care of herself, and that she could not operate anything.*] I have taken over no care, and could not perform my operations of the understanding, the memory and the will, no more than if I had ever had any of these faculties. Each day I felt myself more occupied with him, and with greater fire. That happened because love delivered me little by little from the interior and exterior imperfection, and consumed them; and when had consumed one, it would show it to the soul: and the soul seeing that, was embraced even more with love, and being held in such a degree that it could not see anything in self which was hindrance to love, because it had been desperate: but it always had to live with the purity that love demanded. If there was some imperfection to remove, it was not shown to the soul, or even in the least placed in the mind, in order to attend to it and take over the care of it, no more than if it had never been touched by it. I gave love the keys to the house with ample and full power, so that it might do all that it would like, without having any regard either for the soul or for the body. (Chapter 41)

23. I remained so attentive and so occupied in seeking his work that if he had thrown me with my soul and body into God, it seems to me that I would have found only love and comfort in that. I saw that this love had such an open eye. (See Confession, Number 4) (Chapter 41)

24. It was still more closely besieged; and finding itself more cramped from day to day, it said: I find myself more squeezed in each day, and as a person who having been confined to a city without being able to leave, is next shut up in a beautiful house, accompanied by a beautiful garden; then in a room, then in a closet with little light, then in a prison cell without light; then with handcuffs, then with bound feet, then blindfolded; then he is no longer given anything to eat; then nobody speaks to him anymore; then all hope would be taken away to leave from there except by death; and there would remain for him no other comfort, than knowing that God is the one who does all this by love, and by great mercy, such that this knowledge gives him great contentment and great peace; which nevertheless does not diminish the pain or the besieging that he is in: and moreover he could be given such great pain only in order to be delivered from them he wanted to leave this divine order and disposition, that he sees as just and accompanied by mercy.

Also because of the purity of its love, it said: If God gave me all the graces and merits of the Saints, and with that all the pains of the damned, pure love would consider these pains as the joys of eternal life. And about what it was allotted that it would perhaps say otherwise, if it had to come to the test, it responded: If love considered the pain, it



would not be love of God, but self love. If the cause of a damned, soul's pain, namely sin, could be taken away from it, it would consider the rest of its sorrows as a nothing, in comparison with the sin which would have been removed from it; and if it said otherwise, it would not be in perfect Charity. (Chapter 42)

25. See Justice of God, Number 2.

26. She saw that God kept the spirit so fixed in him, that he did not let it be diverted for a single moment: and the more the spirit was in this occupation, the more difficult it was for it to turn around; because of the opposition and inexpressible contrariness which met there with regard to the spirit, which being thus hidden and engulfed in God, always found this sea, in which it plunged, bigger and deeper, because God drew it there and plunged it in there more and more, so well that if it was continually annihilated and transformed into God, who then says to the soul: [Entire Death, Number 6] I no longer want you to reflect upon operations in order to watch and feel them: for you would always [*Appropriation is a theft.*] steal something, by appropriating what does not belong to you. I want to do the rest of the work without you knowing anything about it: I want to separate you from your mind and drown it in my abyss.

Humanity completely discouraged by these speeches, says: I am the one who remains here in the torments: I am not living, and I cannot die; and I see myself more oppressed and almost annihilated from day to day. When I am shown what was this operation which was so attached in God, that it was impossible for me to breath for a moment; I saw all the efforts of this besiegement rallied against miserable me, and that this operation was so terrible for me, that all the parts of my body were afflicted by it: because to remain thus fixed and stopped without moving for a single moment, is a thing which is fitting for blessed Saints in Paradise, who live in God lost to themselves: But for me, that I live on the earth, and that my spirit may be in heaven; this is the greatest and the most wonderful work that I have ever heard spoken about, and the most terrible martyrdom that I can have in this world. (*Dialogue*, Book 2, Chapter 11)

27. See Pure Love, Number 13.

28. The conditions of this soul are this: It remains extremely delicate, so much so that it cannot endure suspicion of the slightest fault in self; because pure and clean love cannot remain with the smallest imperfection, and because the loving soul not being able to endure any in itself, it would feel from them a pain similar to that of Hell. And as in this life man cannot be without faults, God for some time leaves the soul in the ignorance [*Faults that the Husband corrects in his time. (See Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 1, Verse 5)*] of those, which are in it, because it could not tolerate them: then at another time he gives it the knowledge of all these faults, and by these means he purifies it. (Book 3, Chapter 8)

29. Even though it sometimes seems that such souls have affection for something exterior, one must not [*This is what I said, that there appears to be faults and filth after the purification but which are not so. (See Short Method Chapter 24, Number 1, reported in the Article Property and the Note)*] believe it; it being impossible that a love other than God can enter into such spirits, except if God allows it to be so for some necessity of the soul or the body; and in this case the love of God would not tolerate any hindrance by such a love or such a care permitted for such an occasion, because it would not penetrate to the bottom of the heart, and would be ordered by God only for such a necessity, and it is free of all interior and exterior subjection: for [2 Corinthians 3:17 – “Now the Lord is a Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” *Douay Version*] where the spirit of God is, there is liberty. (Book 3, Chapter 8)

30. O so few creatures are lead by this path of such a delicate and penetrating love, which presses the soul and the body in such a way, that it does not leave any imperfection in them! Because however small it may be, pure love can endure it; and its gentle operation perseveres in the soul as long as it has completely purified it, in order to lead it to its own end without purgatory. (Book 3, Chapter 11)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

31. It is said in the Explanation of his Enigma, that the soul must be purified in the more spiritual things, that there is an active and a passive purification.

Besides the Chapters of the *Ascent of Mt. Carmel* and of *The Dark Night*, which speak only about purification, I am restricting myself to what I am going to write.

32. It is a trait of him who has appetites to always be unhappy and troubled, like he who endures hunger: but what relation and what agreement is there between the hunger that the creatures cause, and this surfeit that the Spirit of God operates? Consequently this satiety of God cannot enter into the soul, if firstly this hunger of the appetite is not banished, seeing that, as has been said, two opposites cannot remain in one same subject, namely, hunger and surfeit. One sees by that, how much what God does, in purging and cleaning the soul of its clashes, is in a certain manner more (Certainly true) than to create it from nothing; because these clashes of appetites and opposite affections seem to be

opposed to God more than the nothingness, which does not resist his Majesty, as the appetite of the creatures does. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 1, Chapter 6)

33. Because the soul is here purged of affections and sensory appetites, it [*All this belongs to the first purification.*] acquires the freedom of spirit, where it gathers the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit. And also here it is admirably delivered from the three enemies, the Devil, the world, and the flesh: for deadening the sensory flavor and taste with respect to all things, neither the Devil, the world, nor sensuality have any weapons or forces against the spirit. This dryness therefore makes the soul walk with purity in the love of God; since it is no longer moved to operate for the taste and flavor of the work, as it was perhaps doing when it had sorrows, but now only to please God. It becomes, not presumptions, nor satisfied, like it maybe was before in the time of its prosperity, but timorous and wary in its works having no satisfaction in self; of what the holy fear, which preserves and increases the virtues, consist. This dryness also dims the concupiscence and the vivid movements of the nature, as has been said; because here very rarely, and almost by a miracle, (except when God himself gives or pours it out some taste) will it find taste or sentient comfort by its diligence in any work or spiritual exercise, as we already said. In this dry night the care by God grows, and the anguishing desire to serve him is increased; because as the breasts of sensuality with which the soul was feeding its appetites, dry up for it, there remains for it only this completely dry and pure desire to serve God: a thing very agreeable to his divine Majesty. (*Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 1, Chapter 13)

34. The house of sensuality being already acquired which is to say, its passions being mortified, its covetousness extinguished, the appetites satisfied and asleep through this happy night of sensory purgation, the soul departed in order to begin the path of the spirit, which is appropriately the path of the advanced, which path is also called the enlightening path, or of infused contemplation, through contemplation God from himself feeds and nourishes it without discourse or help or active [*It is already beginning to enter into passive correspondence.*] cooperation from it. Such is, as we have said, the night and purification of the senses, which in those which must after enter into the other more troublesome and heavier one of the spirit, in order to pass into the divine union of love of God, (for all do not pass here, but usually quite few,) is used to being accompanied by great toils and sensory temptations which last for a long time, though to some more than to others: For some have the Angel of Satan who is the spirit of fornication, in order to torment their senses with strong and abominable temptations, and to work their spirit with dirty thoughts, and the imagination with extremely visible representations: which is sometimes a greater torment to them than death itself. At other times to this night is joined the spirit of blasphemy, which crosses all their conceptions and thoughts of intolerable blasphemy, which sometimes, it suggests in the imagination with so much effort, that it makes them almost pronounce them; At times they are tormented by another abominable spirit which is call spirit of dizziness, which is given to them to exercise them; which obscures their senses so much that it fills them with a thousand scruples and perplexities so embroiled in their judgment that they can never be satisfied in anything, or lean their judgment on any advice or conception which is one of the most severe thorns and horrors of this night, approaching that which happens in the spiritual night.

God usually sends these pains and labors in this sensory night to those that he wants to afterward put in the other one, (though not all enter there,) so that being thus chastised and insulted in this way, they go about exerting and disposing and accommodating the senses and the powers for the union of the Wisdom, [*It is the divine Wisdom itself which must perform the second purgation. It is said just as the Short Method says, (Chapter 24, Numbers 3 & 6), like a devouring fire before the face of God.*] that they must be given there; because if the soul is not tempted, exercised, tested by temptations and labors, its sense cannot arrive at Wisdom. That is why Ecclesiastes says: [*Ecclesiasticus 34:9-10 "What doth he know, that hath not been tried? A man that hath much experience shall think of many things; and he that hath learned many, shall show forth understanding. He that hath no experience, knoweth little, and he that hath been experienced in many things multiplieth prudence."* (Douay)] He who is not tempted, what does he know? And he who has not experimented with it will recognize very little. Which Jeremiah is a good witness of, saying [*Jeremiah 31:18 – "Hearing I heard Ephraim when he went into captivity: thou hast chastised me, and I was instructed, as a young bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Convert me, and I shall be converted, for thou art the Lord my God."* Douay-Rheims Version or King James Version says, "*I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God.*"] You have chastised me and I have been instructed. And the most fitting manner of this chastisement in order to enter into Wisdom, is the interior toils that we are telling here; because they are from those who more effectively purge the senses of all the tastes and comforts which by natural weakness he was affectionate with; and where the soul is also truly humiliated for the elevation and eminence to which it must climb.

Now as for the time when the soul remains in this fast and penance of the senses, one cannot say it certainly; because that does not happen in everyone in the same manner, nor do all endure the same temptations: For that has no other rule or measure than the will of God, according to the more or less of imperfections to be purged that each one has; and also in accordance with the degree of union of love where God wants to raise it, he will humble it more or less, either by pain or by time.

As for those who are better subjects and stronger in suffering, he purges them more vividly and more promptly: Because for the weak, he leads them through this night extremely slowly and with light temptations, and leaves them in this state for a longtime, giving ordinary meals to their senses, so that they do not turn around; and so they arrive late to the purity of perfection in this life: and some among them never reach this, not being completely in this night, or completely outside; for even though they do not pass beyond, nevertheless in order to preserve them in humility and in the knowledge of themselves, God trains them for some space of time and for some days in this barrenness and these temptations, and also helps them from time to time with comforts, so that not lacking courage, they do not return to look for the tastes of the world. *[This is the reef of many spiritual people, who finding no more comforts in God, seeks it in the creatures, and little by little become sensual. I endeavored in all my Writings to warn about them.]*

For other souls, which are yet weaker, God behaves in their place as disappearing, in order to train them in his love: For without this remoteness they would never learn how to approach God. But for the souls which must pass to such a happy and sublime state, like the union of love is, with whatever speed that God leads them with, ordinarily they are accustomed to remaining in this barrenness for a long time, as one has seen by experience. But finishing this Book let us begin to deal with the second night. (*Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 1, Chapter 14)

35. The soul that God wants to lead further is not placed by his Majesty in the union of love, as soon as it departs from the barrenness and the labors of the first purgation and night of the senses; on the contrary much time and many years pass before having gone forth from the state of beginners, it is trained in that of the advanced; in which, like the one which has come from a narrow prison, it walks to the things of God, with much more satisfaction, and with a more abundant and more interior delight, than it had in the beginning, before it entered into the said night. –

Even though, as the purification the soul is not entirely done, *[In that the principle lacks, what is of the spirit, without which for the communication that there is from one side to the other there being only one single tool, the sensory purgation does not remain either accomplished or perfect, even though it has been very strong and very vehement.]* it never lacks barrenness, darkness and pressure, and sometimes much stronger than the previous ones, which are like portents and messengers of the future night of the spirit, how they are not so long lasting, how will be the night that it is waiting for; because having spent one hour, or several, or some nights of this night or tempest, it immediately returns to its accustomed calm: and in this manner God purges certain souls, which must not climb to such a high degree of love that the others, putting them now and then in this night of contemplation or spiritual purgation, often making the light and the darkness come, in accordance with the word of David: *[Psalms 147:17 – “He sendeth his crystal like morsels: who shall stand before the face of his cold?” (Douay) or (KJV) – “He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?”]* He sends his hail, which is to say, his contemplation, like crumbs; even though these crumbs of obscure contemplation are never as intense, as those of this horrible night of contemplation, *[I have written everywhere about this first and last purification and about their difference.]* which we must speak about where God intentionally places the soul in order to raise it to the divine union. This flavor then and this interior taste that we say that the profiteers taste - (See Ecstasy, Number 11) (*Dark Night*, Book 11, Chapter 1)

36. These profiteers have two kinds of imperfections: the ones habitual, and the others actual. The habitual ones are the imperfect affections and habits, which are still like roots, which have remained in the spirit, where the purging of the senses cannot reach. The difference that there is between the two purgations is like cutting the branches and uprooting, or to erase a fresh stain, or remove an old and set in one; for as we said, the purgation of sense is only the door and the principle of contemplation for the spirit, and serves more to accommodate sense to the spirit than to unite the spirit with God: but notwithstanding; the stains *[Namely the property.]* of the old man remain in the spirit, even though he may not see them and though they are not apparent to him; which if they are rubbed out with the soap and the strong detergent of the purgation of this night, the spirit will not be able to reach the purity of the divine union. (*Dark Night*, Book 11, Chapter 2)

37. The affections of my soul, with which I felt and tasted God basely, accomplishing being annihilated and calmed, I left and passed from the communication and aforementioned confined operation, to the divine operation and conversation, which is to say, that my understanding went outside of self, being changed from human into divine; because by means of this purification, uniting itself with God, it no longer understands with its shortened and limited way, like before, but by divine Wisdom, with which it is united; and my will came forth from self, being made divine, it no longer loves with the limited strength and vigor that it loved before, but with the strength and the purity of the divine Spirit: And as the will no longer operates humanly toward God: so is the memory now changed into eternal apprehensions of glory. And finally all the forces and affections of the soul by means of this night and purgation of the old-man are renewed and changed in temperament and divine delights. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 4)

38. See Naked Faith, Number 17.

39. As for the first, namely that this obscure contemplation brings darkness to the soul, that is obvious; because the light and the wisdom of this contemplation is very clear and very pure, and the soul that it entrusts is obscure and impure: from there comes that it suffers much in receiving it, as the sick and impure eyes are worked by the rays of a clear light: And this pain in the soul, because of its impurity is indescribable when it is truly invested with this divine light; because this pure light entrusting the soul in order to chase away the impurity from it, it feels itself so impure and so miserable, that it seems to it that God is against it, and that it is opposed to God. Which is of such great feeling and pain for the soul, (because it seems to the soul that God has rebuked and rejected it) that one of the heaviest labors of God when God kept him in this exercise, was this, saying [Job 7:20 – “*I have sinned: what shall I do to thee, O keeper of men? why hast thou set me opposite to thee. and am I become burdensome to myself?*” (Douay-Rheims) or (KJV) “*I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?*”] Why did you put me opposed to you, and I have been made a burden to myself? In that the soul seeing clearly by means of this clear and pure light, although obscurely, [He says that it sees its impurity obscurely: that is so true, that even though it feels so dirty that it feels horrified, it sees no particular guilt in itself.] its impurity, it obviously knows that it is not worthy of God, or of any creature: and what worries it the most is the fear that it will never be so, and that already all its goods are finished: which comes from it keeping the spirit profoundly plunged into the knowledge and the feeling of its evils and its miseries. For this divine and obscure light makes it touch them on the fingers and on the eye, and makes it clearly know, how by itself it will not be able to have any other thing. In this sense we can take this authority of David; [Psalms 38:12 – “*Thou hast corrected man for iniquity. And thou hast made his soul to waste away like a spider: surely in vain is any man disquieted.*” (Douay) or (Psalms 39:11 - KJV) “*When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.*”] You corrected man because of his iniquity, and you dissolve his soul like a cobweb.

[Entire Death, Number 7] The second way of affliction and torment of the soul comes from its natural and spiritual weakness; because as this divine contemplation invests the soul with some force and impetuosity, in order to strengthen and subdue it, it grieves so much in its weakness, that it almost lapses, particularity sometimes when it is entrusted with a greater force: for the sense and the spirit, just as if they were under some obscure and immense burden, are so suffering and agonizing that they would find relief in dying. The holy man Job having experienced that, did not want [Job 23:6 – “*I would not that he should contend with me with much strength, nor overwhelm me with the weight of his greatness.*” (Douay) or (KJV) – “*Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me.*”] God to come to grips with him in the strength of his arm, and using his power, for fear of being over powered under the load of his greatness: for in the force of this oppression the soul feels such distanced from his favor, that it seems to it, (and it is so,) that the things where it was accustomed to finding support, drew themselves back with the rest, and that there is nobody who has compassion for it: Job also says about this subject: [Job 19:21 – “*Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me.*” (Douay) or (KJV) – “*Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.*”] Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord touched me. A thing wonderful and pitiless together, that the weakness and impurity of the soul in this state is so great, that the hand of God, [This is what I said (See Property, Number 22 the Note) that this same hand, which makes all the punishment of the soul, next makes all its beatitude without changing its touch.

One can explain in this passage, from where it comes that Jesus Christ, essential purity, suffered from the bearing down of the hand of God with such strange punishments, if this divine hand is always beatific with pure subjects, and that it is painful only because of our impurity? It is that Jesus Christ was then laden with the sins of everyone, being covered with the form of the sinner; and it is in this form of sinner that it weighs down. For this hand is the all powerful Justice; and like Jesus Christ covered with all the sins of the world, carried himself alone all our gathered iniquities, therefore this divine hand leans on him with all the force of its arm.] being from self so gentle and so sweet, the soul feels it so heavy and so opposed here, even though his Majesty only touches it without posing it or weighing it down, and this still mercifully, since it is in order to give these graces to the soul, and not to chastise it. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 5)

40. The third way of passion and pain, that the soul endures here, proceeds from two other extremities, namely divine and human, which are united here. The divine is this purgative contemplation; the human is the subject of the soul; because as the divine entrusts the soul in order to install it and renew it in order to make it divine, stripping it of habitual affections and properties of the old-man, to which it is strongly united, struck, conjoined and conformed, it breaks and undoes it in such a way, absorbing it in a profound darkness, that the soul feels itself consumed and melted at the sight of its miseries by a cruel death of spirit, just as if a beast having devoured and swallowed it alive, it felt directed in its dark stomach, suffering the same agonies as Jonah [Jonas 2:1 – “*Now the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonas: and Jonas was in the belly of a fish for three days and three nights.*” (Douay) or (Jonah 2:1 KJV) – “*Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,*”] in the belly of the whale; in that it must be in this tomb of dark death for the spiritual resurrection that it awaits. [Entire Death, Number 1] David describes this pain though inexplicable, saying: [Psalms 17:5-7 – “*The sorrows of death surrounded me: and the torrents of iniquity*

troubled me. The sorrows of hell encompassed me: and the snares of death prevented me. In my affliction I called upon the Lord, and I cried to my God: And he heard my voice from his holy temple: and my cry before him came into his ears." Douay Version (or 18: 4-6 KJV) – *"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of unGodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears."*

The breakers of death surrounded me; the pains of Hell besieged me. I cried out in my tribulation. But what this doleful soul feels the most here is that it seems to it that God rejected it, and that being horrified of that, he flung it into the darkness; which for it is a great pain and a lamentable pain, to believe that God has abandoned it. David feeling this pain very much [*This pain of the abandonment by God is the most terrible pain of the soul. It is a kind of eternal damnation: the spiritual Hell.*] says on this subject; [*Psalms 87:6-8 – (or 88:5-7 KJV)*] Like the injured, sleeping in the sepulchers, about which you have no recollection, are pushed back by your hand, they put me in the inferior lake, in the dark places and the shadow of death; your fury has been confirmed over me, and you have attracted all your moves over me: because truly, when this obscure contemplation squeezes and clasps, the soul in the living shadow of death feels the moans and pains of Hell; which consists in feeling itself to be without God, [*Those who have never felt the sweet presence of God in their souls, and his ineffable caresses, not understanding the unbearable rigors of this absence and this rejection by God, would not in the least have compassion for the sorrows of this soul.*] punished and rejected, and that his Majesty is indignant and incensed with it: for all that is felt here; and which also is that it seems to it, in a timorous apprehension, that this is for always. And it also feels the same abandonment on the part of all the creatures, and feels scorned by them, particularly by its friends; that is why David immediately pursues: [*Psalms 87:9 (or 88:8 KJV)*] You have moved away those of my acquaintance; you have made me an abomination with respect to them. And the Prophet Jonah, as he who had experienced it exteriorly: [*Jonas 2:4 – "And thou hast cast me forth into the deep, in the heart of the sea, and a flood hast compassed me: all thy billows, and thy waves have passed over me."* (Douay) or (*Jonah 2:4 - KJV*) – *"Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple."*] You cast me into the depths of the heart of the sea, and a river surrounded me, all your gulfs and your waves passed over me. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 6)

41. The fourth pain is brought about in the soul by another excellence of this obscure contemplation, knowing the grandeur and Majesty of God, from which is born in the soul the feeling of another extremity that there is in it, namely an extreme misery and poverty, which is one of the principle pains of this purgation; because it feels a profound emptiness in self, and a death of three kinds of goods arranged for the contentment of the soul, which are the temporal, natural and spiritual ones, seeing itself reduced to opposite evils, namely, to the misery of imperfections, to barrenness and to the emptiness of apprehensions of the powers and to the abandonment of the spirit in darkness. For in that here God purges the soul according to the sensory and spiritual substance, and according to the interior and exterior powers, it must be put in the void, in poverty and in the abandon by all its parts, leaving it dry, empty and in darkness; because the sensory part is purified in the drought, the powers in the void of their apprehensions, and the spirit in obscure darkness. –

This is a very agonizing suffering, like if a person were hung and held in the air so that he might not breath. It also goes about purging the soul, annihilating, or evacuating, or consuming in it, (like fire makes the rust of metal,) all the affections and all the imperfect habits that it contracted during its whole life; which being well beforehand rooted in the soul, it usually suffers great destruction and interior torment, - the word of Ezekiel being verified here: [*Ezekiel 24:10-11 – "Heap together the bones, which I will burn with fire: the flesh shall be consumed, and the whole composition shall be sodden, and the bones shall be consumed. Then set it empty upon burning coals, that it may be hot, and the brass thereof may be melted: and let the filth of it be melted in the midst thereof, and let the rust of it be consumed."* Douay Version or King James Version 1611 as followed: *"Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned. Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed."*] Gather the bones, that I will burn in the fire: the meat will be cooked, and the bones will dry: In which the pain that one endures in the emptiness and the poverty of the soul is signified. – He adds: also put it on the embers empty, so that his bronze is heated and melted; and so that his is undone in the middle of it, and its rust may be consumed.

Our Lord humbles the soul very much here, in order to exalt it greatly afterwards: and if he did not order by his providence that these feelings, when they become more lively in the soul, not fall quickly asleep, it would abandon the body in a very few days; but it feels intimate vivacity only now and then, which is sometimes so poignant, that it seems to the soul [*All these states are explained throughout that I wrote about Job. (See the Explanations of the Old Testament, Volume 8)*] that it sees perdition and Hell completely open. For those ones are of those who truly descend in to Hell alive, and are here purged as if in Purgatory; because this purgation is the one that it was necessary to make mistakes though venial ones. And so the soul which passes through these straits and remains well purges, or does not enter into this place, or does not stop there in the least, in that here a hour of suffering serves more than a few in this other place. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 6)

42. I will report the feelings of Jeremiah on that: I am [*Lamentations 3:1-2*] the man who sees any poverty in the cane of his indignation. He threatened me and led me to darkness, and not to light; and the rest. – Although this is a great happiness for the soul, because of the indicated good which will come to it from this, when in his soul, God will perform the wonders which Job speaks about, [*Job 12:22*] pulling the profound goods from the darkness, and putting the shadows of death to the light, in the way that David says [*Psalms 138:12 (or 139:12 KJV)*], his light is as great as his darkness was: nevertheless for the excessive pain that it suffers, and for the great uncertainty that it has about its cure, (for it is advised that its affliction will never end, and that God according to the word of David, [*Psalms 142:3 (or 143:3 KJV)*] put it in darkness like those long dead,) its spirit being in agony on this subject, and its heart in great trouble, that I say deserves that one have great compassion for it: because to this solitude and abandon that this Night causes for it, is joined still another torment, which is, that it finds neither comfort nor support in any doctrine, or in any spiritual Master, because whatever reason that he pleads to it in order to comfort it, by showing it the goods which are found in these pains, it cannot believe that (It believes that he does not understand). For as it is so steeped and so plunged in this feeling of hurts, where it sees its miseries so clearly, it seems to it, that as they do not see what it sees and what it feels, they say that not understanding it; and instead of receiving comfort, on the contrary it receives new pain, seeming to it that is not a cure for its hurt: And truly it is thus; in that until Our Lord has succeeding in purging it in the way that he wants, there is neither means nor help serves and benefits it for its pain: and this all the more because the soul in this state can do very little, like he who is in a dark cell shackles on feet and hands, without being able to move, or see, or feel any help from on high or down low (Union, Number 46), until, I say, the spirit is softened, humbled and purified and becomes so [*This is the feeling of St. Catherine of Genes. See Creation, Number 5, and also of St. Francis de Sales, See Number 69 below,*] so subtle, so simple and so delicate, that it can be made one with the Spirit of God, according to the degree of union of love, to which the mercy of God will want to elevate it; for in accordance with that, the purgation is stronger or less strong, longer or less long.

But if this purgation must be something, as strong as it may be, it lasts for some years, nevertheless presupposing that in these methods there are intervals and relieves, to which by divine dispensation this dark contemplation; ceasing to rest in purgative form and way, invests in illuminative and loving way, where the soul as if having left this prison and put in recreation of latitude and liberty, feels and tastes a great sweetness of peace and a loving familiarity with God, with an easy and abundant spiritual communication.

This is an indication of the salvation that the said purgation performs in it, and a presage of the abundance that it awaits. And that is sometimes so excellent, that it seems to the soul that it is already at the end of its labors; because the spiritual things are of this quality in the soul, (when they are purely spiritual,) that when the torments come back, it seems to the soul that it will never come out of it and that it will no longer have any goods, as we saw by the cited authorities; and on the contrary, when it finds itself favored by spiritual goods, it seems to it that it will no longer have any hurt and that in the future it will never lack goods, as David confesses seeing himself in this enjoyment [*Psalms 29:7 (or 30:6 KJV)*] I said my abundance; I will be troubled no more. – As we see that afterwards David's feelings changed, feeling several labors, even though he had thought and said in the time of his abundance, that he would never be shaken; so the soul which sees itself filled with these spiritual goods, not penetrating down to the root of the imperfection and the impurity which still stay in it, believes that its toils are finished. But this thought does not happen often; for until the purification is achieved, rarely does it happen that the gentle communication is so abundant, that it covers for it the root which remains, so that the soul does not come to feel an indescribable something in the interior, which it lacks, or which is to be done, which does not let it enjoy this relief entirely, feeling on the inside like an enemy of its, whose return it fears, and that he may come to still do his own, even though he is pacified and asleep; like in fact, when it is the most assured, this returning enemy absorbs and engulfs the soul in another harder degree darker and more deplorable than the previous one. – The experience that it had of the past good, -- does not prevent it from thinking in this second degree, that all is lost for it, and that it will no longer be like in the past: this belief so well established and confirmed is brought about in the soul by the actual apprehension of the spirit, which annihilates in it everything which can give it joy. So even though it seems to the soul in this purgation that it loves God, and that it would give a thousand lives for him; (as is true: for the soul in these labors loves God with truth and great efficacy;) nevertheless that is not alleviation for it: on the contrary that causes it more pain; because loving him as long as it has no care for any other thing, as it sees itself so miserable and doubting if God loves it, (because for them it has no assurance that there is any thing in it which makes it worthy of being loved, but that rather it deserves to be abhorred not only by God, also by all creatures forever,) it laments itself and is afflicted from seeing in itself causes why it deserves to be forsaken and rebuked by him that it loves so passionately. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 7)

The holy Author continues in an admirable way until the end of his Book on the *Dark Night*, and he tells in great detail what I am going to say summarily; That the soul cannot pray, that it is pushed back by its prayer, that there is a wall between God and it, that nothing relieves it outside or inside, that it is repelled by peace, that instead of the peace that it tasted before, it has only annoying and continual worry. Next he adds:

43. Now this agitation or obstacle to peace is an annoying worry about many fears, imaginations and fights that the soul suffers in itself, where with the apprehension and the feeling of its miseries, it suspects itself lost, and that its goods are dried up forever. From that comes into the spirit [*The soul finds remedies in that only in surrendering itself by a*

holy despair to the vengeful Justice of him that it wanted to love, and who rejects its love.] a certain pain and moan so deep that it makes the soul burst out in spiritual roars and cries, sometimes uttering them through the mouth, and it is melted and breaks out into tears, when there are forces to do it, even though it receives this relief very seldom. The Royal Prophet announces it: [*Psalm 37:9 (or 38:8 KJV)*] I have been extremely afflicted and humbled; I roared out a groan from my heart: which roar is a thing of great pain. For sometimes the soul, by the sharp and prompt memory of the miseries where it finds itself, feels so much pain and sorrow, that I do not know how it could be explained, except by the comparison that Job said [*Job 3:24*] being in the same suffering; My bellow is like waters which overflow. For rivers sometimes overflow so much that they drown and cover everything: in that way this roar and feeling of the soul sometimes grows so strong that drowning and running through it, it feels the soul with all its force and deep affections of agonies and spiritual sorrows, beyond everything one can express or even exaggerate about it. – This war is all the more profound because that peace that the soul is awaiting will be profound: and its spiritual sorrow is intimate, delicate and purified, because the love that it must possess will also be very intimate and purified. For all the more polished that the work must be, the labor must follow and walk in proportion, and be all the stronger because the edifice (building) will be solid and secure. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 9)

44. But let us see now why this light of contemplation, being so sweet and lovable to the soul that it no longer has anything to desire, since, as has been said, it is the same one with which it must unite itself, and in which in the state of perfection it must find all the goods that it has longed for; nevertheless when this light of contemplation encircles it, it causes the soul these arduous beginnings and these strange effects that we have told about. One responds easily to this doubt, saying, what we already said in part, namely that on the side of contemplation and divine infusion there is nothing which in itself which can give pain; on the contrary much sweetness and contentment, like it will make afterwards. But the cause is the weakness and the imperfection that the soul has for them, and the contrary dispositions in order to receive this sweetness. And so the divine light coming to encircle the soul makes it suffer in the aforementioned manner. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 9)

45. For a greater enlightenment about what we said and about what we will say, one must notice here, that this purgative and living notice or divine light, which we are dealing with, behaves towards the soul, purging and disposing it in order to unite it with self perfectly, just like [*See above on Short Method Chapter 24, Numbers 7-8*] the fire in wood in order to transform it into self. For the fire material applied to the wood begins at first to dry it out, chasing away the dampness. After the fire blackens, darkens the wood and makes it ugly, and drying it little by little it lights it and casts outside all the gnarled and dark accidents which are contrary to the fire: And finally, beginning to inflame it on the outside and to heat it, the fire comes to transform it into self, and to make it as beautiful as the fire itself.

Which being done, there is no more action or passion of self on the part of the wood, (except that the quantity and weight is less subtle and less light than those of the fire,) seeing that it has in self the properties and the actions of the fire. For it is dry, and being dry, it is hot, and being hot, it heats, it is also bright and lights up, and is much lighter than before, the fire operating in self all its properties and effects. Now we must philosophize in the same way concerning this divine fire of love of contemplation, which before uniting and transforming the soul into self, first purges it of all its contrary accidents, and forces all its deformities outside, and makes it become black and dark, so much that it appears worse than before. For as this divine purgation goes about distancing all the evils and the vicious humors, which it does not uncover, in order to be rooted further in the soul, and thus it does not know that there was so much evil in it, and now that in order to put them outside and annihilate them, it is not shown them clearly by this obscure light of divine contemplation, (even though it is worse only beforehand with regards to itself or to God;) as, I say, it sees in self what it does not perceive before, it seems to it to be such that not only is it unworthy of God looking at it; but even that he abhors it and that already he is horrified by it. From this comparison we can now understand several things concerning what we say and what we must say.

We know that the soul does not feel these pains on the part of divine Wisdom, since as the Sage (Wiseman) says; [*Wisdom 7:11*] “all the goods came to me with her”; but on the side of the weakness and imperfection that the soul has, in order to not be able to receive the light, the sweetness and the delight without this purgation; (in the way of the wood, which as soon as it is in the fire, cannot be transformed until it is disposed;) and this is what makes it suffer so much: which Ecclesiasticus confirms, saying what he suffered in order to be united with it and enjoy it: [*Ecclesiasticus 51:29*] My stomach has been upset in looking for it, and because of that I possess a good possession. –

From that we can draw the manner of suffering of the souls of Purgatory: For the fire would have no power over them, if they were entirely disposed to reign and be united with God through glory, and if they did not have any guilt for which they should suffer, which is the matter where the fire is taken, which being consumed there is nothing more to burn; as here the imperfections being consumed, the pain of the soul finishes, and the enjoyment remains such that it can be in this life. –

We will also draw from this comparison what was said above, namely how it is true, that after these alleviations the soul returns to suffer with vehemence and more refinement than before. The reason is, because after this display which is made when the imperfections have been more outwardly purified, the fire of love returns to touch what remains to be purified and consumed more interiorly; in which the suffering of the soul is all the more intimate, subtle

and spiritual, because it goes about whittling down the most intimate, the most delicate, the spiritual and the most deeply on the inside imperfection of the soul: and that is done like it happens to the wood; for the more the fire penetrates it, the more it also disposes it interiorly with more force and more furor in order to possess it. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 10)

46. This feeling which is so keen and so great happens in this way; because in this wound of love that God makes in the soul, the will is raised very quickly to the possession of the Friend whose divine touch it has felt, and with the same promptitude it feels the absence, and together the moaning because of the deprivation of this good. For these visits are not like others, in which God recreates and satisfies the soul, filling it with peaceful sweetness: but he makes them only to harm, not to cure, and the more to torment than to satisfy, seeing that they serve only to vivify the knowledge and increase the appetite, and consequently the pain. (Loss, Number 23) They are named wounds of love, which are very savory to the soul, in that it would always like to die a thousand deaths from those blows, because they make it go forth outside self and enter into God. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 1)

47. Wanting to say, o embraced love, which glorifies one tenderly with your loving movements in the greatest force and capacity of my soul! Namely, giving me divine intelligence in accordance with every ability of my understanding, and communicating love to me in accordance with the greatest extent of my will, which is to say, rising very highly, with divine intelligence, the capacity of my understanding in a very intense fervor of my will and in the substantial union declared above. Which happens in this way, and more than can be expressed, when this flame is elevated into the soul: For in that the soul is wholly purged and very pure, Wisdom absorbs it very profoundly, very subtly, very highly into self with its flame, which Wisdom penetrates by its purity from one and to the other, and in this absorbing by Wisdom, the Holy Spirit exerts the glorious shooting out of its flame that we said, which flame is so gentle that the soul immediately adds:

Now being no longer hard to me, which is to say, since you do not afflict, do not squeeze and torment more like you did before. For this flame, when the soul was in a state of spiritual purgation, which is when it entered into the contemplation, was so not sweet and peaceable to it, like it is at present in this state of union. That is why one must know, that before this fire of divine love is introduced and united in the most intimate part of the soul through purgation and perfect purity, this flame strikes blows in the soul, destroying and consuming the imperfections of its bad habits; and that is the operation of the Holy Spirit, in which the Holy Spirit disposed it toward the divine union and transformation into God through love. For the same fire of love, which is since united with it in this glory of love, is what encircled it before, purging it; like the same fire which takes to the wood is that which seizes it and beats it with its flame, drying it and denuding it of its cold accidents, up to the point of disposing it by its heat to be able to be penetrated by it, and transformed in its nature. In which exercise the soul suffers a lot and feels great pains in the spirit, which sometimes bounce on the senses, this flame being very troublesome to it; as we amply discussed in the Treatise of the *Dark Night*, and of the *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, which prevents me from saying more about it. It is suffice right now to know that the same God, who wants to enter into the soul by union and transformation of love, is he who encircled it before, and purged it with the light and heat of his divine flame; so that one which is presently sweet to it was so arduous to it beforehand. And consequently it is as if it said: Since not only are you not dark to me like before, but you are the divine light of my understanding, with which I can look at you; and not only do you no longer make my weakness lapse, but on the contrary you are the strength of my will, through the means of which I can love and enjoy you, being wholly converted into divine love: and you are no longer a burden or pressure to my soul, but quite the opposite you are the glory, the delights and the freedom of it; since what is in the Canticle can be said about me; [*Canticle 8:5*] who is the one which climbs out of the desert, abundant in delights, leaning on her Beloved, spreading love here and there. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verses 3-4)

48. We must explain here, what debts the soul feels it has paid and satisfied: and consequently you must know that the souls which reach this Kingdom, have usually passed through several trials and tribulations, [*Acts 14:21*] because one must enter in the Kingdom of the Heaven through many tribulation which have already flowed out in this state.

What those who must reach the union of God endure are sufferings and temptations of various sorts and manners in the senses; and pains, tribulations, temptations, darkness and anguish in the spirit, so that the purgation of these two parts are done, like we said in the *Ascent of Mt. Carmel* and in the *Dark Night*. The reason for that is because the delights and the knowledge of God cannot be well placed or seated in the soul, if the senses and the spirit are not well purged and refined: and in that the sufferings and penances purify and refine the senses; and the tribulations, temptations, darkness and anguish refine and dispose the spirit; one must pass through there, in order to be transformed into God, [*like it happens to those, who must see it in the other life after the pains of Purgatory.*] some more roughly, others less, according to the degrees of union where God wants to elevate them, and according to what they have to be purged. Through these sufferings where God puts the spirit and the senses, the soul by bitterness acquires virtues, strength and perfection, because virtue [*2 Corinthians 12:19*] is perfected in infirmity, and is polished by the exercise of the passions. For iron cannot serve the plan of the artisan if it does not go through the fire and the hammer, in which the iron suffers damage with regard to what it was before. Jeremiah says that God [*Lamentations 1:13*] sent the fire from



on high into his bones, and taught him: and about the hammer he says: [*Jeremiah 31:18*] Lord, you have chastised me and I have learned: that is why Ecclesiasticus says; [*Ecclesiasticus 34:9*] He who has not been tempted, what does he know?

It should be noted here, why there are so few who reach this high state. The reason is, because in this sublime and excellent work that God begins, there are several weaknesses which immediately flee the labor, without wanting to subject themselves to the least desolation or mortification, or wanting to work with solid patience. From that comes that not finding them strong in the favor that he did for them, beginning to polish them, he does not go further in purifying them of and elevating them from the dust of the earth, to what requires more strength and more consistency. So that one can say with Jeremiah [*Jeremiah 12:5*] to those who want to pass beyond without enduring the slightest things, or subjecting themselves to these sufferings: If you had pain in following the pedestrians, how will you be able to catch the people on horse back? And having been assured in the land of peace, what will you do in the pride of Jordan? As if he were saying: if in the labors which usually and humanly happen to all the living, you have so little vigor, that you have to run away, and you consider you suffer much, how could you follow the trail of the horses, which is to depart from common and ordinary pains, and to wipe away other sharper and more vehement sufferings? And if you did not want to make war against the peace and the taste of your earth, which is your sensuality, but you want to be peaceful and comforted there, what will you do in the pride of Jordan, which is to say, will you tolerate the impetuous waves of trials and tribulations of spirit which are more interior? (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 5)

49. O souls which want to live assured and comforted, if you knew how expedient it is for you to suffer the tribulations in order to reach this state and of what benefit is the suffering and mortification to obtain such great goods, you would not at all seek consolation in anything; but rather you would bear the cross with gall (bitterness) and pure vinegar, and would keep it with great happiness, seeing that dying thus to the world and to yourselves, you would live to God in delights of the spirit, and enduring the exterior patiently, you would deserve that God cast his eyes upon you, in order to clean and purify you on the inside by spiritual labors. For those to whom God wants to do such a favor, must return many favors to him, that they have been greatly patient and constant, and that in their life they have been very agreeable in his eyes. So the Angel said to Tobias, [*Tobit 12:13*] because he was agreeable to God, had been necessary, had endured temptation, to test him more, and give him greater graces. In fact Scripture says [*Tobit 14:3*], that he spent the rest of his days in joy. We see the same in Job, [*Job 1:6*] that God having received him as his servant in the presence of good and evil Spirits, he gave him the grace to send him rough sufferings forth with, in order to exalt him afterwards much more than before, as much spiritually as temporally. God behaves in this way toward those that he wants to favor. (See Union, Number 55) (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 5)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives an account of

50. St. Thomas: It is necessary to purge the understanding of two deformities; the first is the one which is of the diversity of the exterior things; the second is the one which is through the discourse of reason; which happens depending on whether all the operations of the soul are reduced to the simple contemplation of the intelligible truth: from where it comes that [*Note, please, all things forsaken one persists: this word persist signifies a state which no longer varies: but everything must be forsaken.*] all things forsaken one persists in the contemplation of God alone. (2.2qu.180 Art. 6) (*Notes on John of the Cross*, Disciple 2, Section 6)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

51. St. Bernard: There are some in whom Jesus Christ is not yet resuscitated, who in the anxiety of the sufferings and affliction of penitence, die all day, not having yet received spiritual consolation. If these days were not shortened, who could endure it? (Sermon 3 on the Resurrection) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

52. St. Gregory: The Prophet said well: [*Psalms 40:4 (or 41:3 KJV)*] You have overturned his bed in his infirmity; as if he said, everything man prepared for the reposed, you changed that for him by a secret judgment. – From where it comes that the Lord makes this path sour and difficult for his elect, which sets out toward him. (Book 3 of the *Morals*, Chapter 15) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

53. See Distractions, Number 16.

54. St. Bonaventure: The first temptation is the removal and lack of devotion. Therefore such a special and singular refuge being removed, man is some way disarmed, remains exposed to the enemies of temptations, and for this reason becomes timorous and faint-hearted.

From that follows another temptation, namely, of and disgust; because man is disgusted by every good: he is bored in praying, reading, meditating; he is bored in hearing good things, in speaking about them or in doing them; and to assist in divine things: which he could not do without a good suffering. (*On the Advancement of the Religious*, Chapter 2)

In this temptation of boredom when the soul has no contentment in the spiritual things, and it rejects the comfort of the carnal ones, therefore never finding any refuge, it is consumed by an evil sadness.

Another troublesome and dangerous temptation follows [*This one comes only from a lack of submission of the will, to suffer the other pains as long as it will please God.*] from impatience with God: why he is so hard and merciless with the afflicted, so stingy in giving his grace to the suffering poor, and to whomever asks for it with so much anxiety, and who knocks at the door with so much importunity. And this temptation is at times so violent, that man sometimes outside of self and by the vehemence of the sadness is almost palpitating; because he does not find any relief in prayer, which should be his sole refuge in this oppression -- feeling the heaven like brass.

The most bitter temptations are that of hesitating in faith, of despairing of the mercy of God, blaspheming him and the Saints; and the temptation of cutting one's hands, of killing oneself: and a certain perplexity of a plaintive conscience, to not allow any beneficial advice. (Chapter 7) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

55. The Bishop of Tarassone (speaking about St. Teresa): In this darkness the Devil also hid himself, and added to her pains other greater ones, representing to her a thousand reveries, through which she was reproached by and separated from God; and that with an agony and pressure of heart so terrible and so intolerable, that one cannot compare it with anything better than with what the damned souls in Hell suffer. She found no comfort in this horrible storm; because grace was so hidden, that she did not see the least sparkle from it, and it did not seem that it has ever had her, in that the goods that she had received from Our Lord, all that appeared to her to be a dream and imagination. She saw only the multitude of her sins and offenses. In order to increase her death more, God sometimes put her soul in such great abandonment, that she had only rebukes, clashes and wounds from heaven, as if God had turned his back to her, or that she had been his enemy. (*Life of St. Teresa*, Book 1, Chapter 12) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

#### ST. TERESA

56. Being therefore alone, without having any person with whom I could rest, I could neither read nor pray: but I was like a person frightened of such great tribulation, and tormented by a strange fear that the Devil had deceived me, or that may deceive me; I was completely troubled and afflicted without knowing where to put my head. I saw myself in this affliction several times, though it seems to me that there had been none as extreme as this one. I remained [*Here she is still speaking only about the first tests, of only several days, which are the least of this path, as one could see by what the Blessed John of the Cross declared about it (see above). If this stake had lasted four or five years, that would have been another thing.*] in this state four or five hours, without receiving any comfort either from the earth or Heaven; Our Lord letting me suffer, plunged in the apprehension of a thousand perils. (*Life*, Chapter 25) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

57. -- God gives license to the Devil [*She is speaking here about a more advanced state of longer and stronger pains. As St. Teresa stopped writing twenty years before her death, one must not be surprised if she does not speak about longer and more considerable pains. But her Confessor writes what apparently happened to her since. As she had only fleeting pains, she does not speak but about a fleeting union either; because the one follows the other.*] to torment the soul in order to test it, and to put in it spirit that it is approved by God; for there is a quantity of things which combat it, with an interior pressure so sentient and so unbearable, that I do not know what to compare it to, except to the pains that one suffers in Hell, in that during this storm, one does not receive any consolation. -- If one wants to take a book in the vernacular, one does not understand it more than if one did not know a single letter in it, because the understanding is not capable of it. -- What then will this poor soul do, if it happens that it is perturbed by these storms for several days? If it prays, it is as if it said nothing, I understand, for its consolation; because it does not receive any of it in its interior, and even it does not understand what it says, even though it then prays vocally: because for the mental it is not the time, in that the powers are capable of it. -- It is true that it cannot express or say what happens in it; because these are spiritual agonies and pains, which cannot be named. (*Chastisement of the Soul*, Dem. VI, Chapter 1) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

58. The Bishop of Tarassone (still speaking about St. Teresa): These sufferings and agonies last two years for it, though not always in a same state, or in a same manner. This path of barrenness and darkness is ordinary to the great Saints, and it is the most arduous and the most terrible for those who deal with God; for as he hides himself inside of their souls, and he is there like in a cloud and in obscure darkness, and on the other hand he removes from them the discourse of the understanding, and the taste and the delight of the will, it seems to them that they are in a desert and very great wilderness, and in the darkness without God, although it may be nevertheless true that he is for them more

present there, though more hidden, cultivating the soul by this darkness where it is, and purging it of the imperfections in order to make it worthy. The Blessed St. Francis was in this state for a period of two years, according to the account of his life; and sometimes he found himself so irritating and so displeasing, that he did not want any Religious man to speak to him. It is certain that the greatest cross that the Saints have, is *[The sinners and the people who are not interior, do not feel this terrible pain. And how would they feel it, since they seek their satisfactions in the things of the earth; from which such a soul is so extremely removed, that they are torments to it, and not refreshments. If it happens, that through in faithless one looks for some relief, this relief is changed into bitterness; and there remains for the soul only this double sorrow, to have wanted to take pleasure outside of God, and to not have found any, but on the contrary an intolerable torment.]* this solitude, this darkness and this abandonment by God. (*Life of St. Teresa*, Book 1, Chapter 12) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

#### TAULERE

59. By these two paths one reaches the true love of God; the first is a delight of the abundant grace of God. – The other is a route of resignation, of crosses or of afflictions; here man is deprived of every spiritual comfort, and this path is a path of barrenness and drought in devotion. – These spiritual Martyrs have cares and agonies in this life, so much that often they do not know to what side they must turn themselves, because of this sadness, leaving only on self, naked hope and charity, in a certain obscurity. – And when they bring more diligence and make more efforts, they are still much dryer on the inside, and become harder than stone; so well that in great pain do they sometime suffer patiently, and are more and more tormented and beaten by courage. – Now it seems to them that it is impossible that they are not offending God either by impatience, or by despair, or by boredom and sadness of heart; which causes them great sorrow, seeing that they *[This is the cause of the sorrow of the hatred of every king of offense: for if one did not fear offending God, one would not suffer such terrible torments.]* hate all kinds of offenses. – They would also like and desire with all their heart to eradicate and conquer their vices and to acquire virtues: but they cannot, because that, and similar things, at times cause them such great sorrows, chagrins and agonies, that it seems to them to endure the pains of Hell; which comes to them from the great love that they have for God, and from their faithfulness to his service, even though they do not know that themselves: from where it comes that they esteem themselves the greatest sinners of the world, although before God they are very pure. (Sermon of Several Martyrs) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

60. This man therefore going forth, *[Note going forth: it is that the greatest pain to be obliged to act and converse in these pains: and one is almost always constrained there, as one saw in what I wrote on the Canticle. (See above Notes on Chapter 5, Verse 3 in the Article Property)]* sees himself miserable and grieved. Here all the ardor, impetuosity and impatience of love are softened and chilled, and the burning summer changes into autumn and all the riches as very great dearth. And for them, by a certain compassion for itself, he flings out groans, asking to where the fervor of charity, compunction, praise and the agreeable action of graces were withdrawn; how he is destitute of interior comfort, intimate joy, and sentient taste; and how this vehement ardor of love, and all the gifts that he has ever received, are in this way entirely extinguished. And one acts with him no more than like a learned man, but who has lost his skill and all his pain. However often the nature is troubled and afflicted for this loss. Sometimes also, with the permission of God, man thus grieved is moreover stripped of worldly things, or of friends and parents, and forsaken by all the creatures; and everything of righteousness that he had leaves in forgetfulness and is valued as nothing, and men interpret his actions and all his life in the worst way. All those with whom he lives also scorn him. He is also sometimes afflicted by various sicknesses, or tormented by corporeal temptation, or that which exceeds the rest, by spiritual temptations. Being then reduced to such great misery and poverty, he begins to apprehend the fall, and is fought by a kind of distrust, which are the extremity and the last term where a person can remain in grace without falling into despair. (*On the Decoration of the Spiritual Wedding*, Book 2, Chapter 29) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

61. Dennis the Carthusian: The Devil seeing that there are some that he cannot defeat by temptations and carnal sins, either by the things which are against reason, he is accustomed to weakening them with temptations of certain infidelity or doubt concerning the truth of Christian faith; he invites some of them to dishonest thoughts about Jesus Christ, and about the Blessed Virgin, or to think indecently and shamefully about God, or even to blaspheme; he tempts others to undo them in this life by sadness, despair of boredom; others finally are tempted by a strange barrenness of spirit, so much that the heaven appears to them to be of bronze and the earth of iron, and it seems to them that they are condemned. *[The remedy of all these evils is resignation in order to carry this state and the surrender of all oneself into the hands of God; because this surrender softens the bitterness of this pain, which sometimes becomes such that it inevitably ends in holy despair or a despair of the damned. Wicked despair makes a person kill himself; or leaving the good, he is already damned, it can only be so a little more: and this is the greatest misfortune of the world, which never happens to him who is resigned, and which by a holy despair for himself leaves himself entirely to God, who saves him from every evil, keeps and cherishes him in the way that Scripture says (Deuteronomy 32:10) like the pupil of the eye. To whatever excess the pain can go, if the soul is surrendered, it suffers it in peace, and the rages of pains come only*

from infidelity or from not surrendering ourselves to God.] (Remedies to the Temptations, Article 35 & Dialogue on the Instructions of Novices) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

62. Father Ildephonse d'Orosco: The toilings of the body are like blows struck against the wall of the city, which beat as if on the outside: but the temptations of the spirit strike and harm in the interior and feel more vividly. (Book 2 of his *Confession*) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

63. Father John of Jesus Maria: Concerning the temptations of blasphemy, one must notice the furious operation of the Devil, with great instigation, in order to throw down the servants of God in great fits of impatience. This temptation, as far as I could understand, is not used to coming alone, but accompanied by a great interior sadness, or temptation to despair or hatred of God, or of violent temptations against chastity: and the reason for this is, because the inferior part of man, feeling greatly afflicted and deprived of every sort of comfort and taste, it is turned against reason like an enraged dog. – Then he raises himself from the horrible thoughts, and sometimes it lets itself go to words, which ring badly, which nevertheless are said without deliberation by the vehemence and the impetuosity of temptation. (*School of Prayer*, Treatise 3, Number 10) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 11, Section 1)

#### ST. THOMAS

64. See Consistency Number 33.

65. -- All the rebellion of the irascible appetite, and of the concupiscent one against reason, cannot be taken away by virtue; seeing that according to the nature of the irascible and concupiscent appetite, that which is good according to the senses, is sometime repugnant to reason; even though that can be done by divine virtue, which is powerful enough to change natures: nevertheless this rebellion is diminished by virtue, so long as the aforementioned powers are accustomed to being submitted to reason. – The passions, which are inclined toward evil are not always [*Ordinarily speaking; because man can always fall.*]

*It is of very great consequence to not confuse (with this) the fixed state of prayer, which must no longer return to the first activity, like the child does not go back into the womb of his mother. For the person is truly established there, who having quit all operations of self, let himself be moved to the liking of God, either in order to be passively acting, or passively suffering. But although the stability of this state may be real, and the soul must never at any time return to its own operations, since that would be to fall, and even that would be difficult; it is not said for that, the soul must never again act, since it acts being moved and acted by God, not only in unity of action, but even in multiplicity of actions, without nevertheless being multiplied, or without going forth from its unity and passivity. For as it is passive in order to endure the operation of God, it is passive in order to act by the operation of God; and this passivity is very acting: it can do a hundred deeds without any actions from self, which is to say, without actions of which it is the principle agent; but actions by correspondence to him who moves it, who gives him to want it and do it. The passivity for the interior and the prayer must therefore be fixed. I mean that the soul can never take up meditation again, and must never do so; its prayer is always pure contemplation: and its prayer becomes its action and its action its prayer. This does not prevent there being time, where the Contemplation changing nature, is more or less perceived, more or less luminous, more or less intimate and tasted.*

*But for the virtue, even though the soul may no longer be inconvenienced by rebellions of the body, it is certain that one can always fall, and that there is no state of impeccability in this life, although there is a very real stable state. God however purifies the soul in such a way, that even though it can stumble and fall, its body leaves it in peace.] removed, either by acquired virtue, or by infused virtue; but they are mortified as much by the acquired virtue as by the infused virtue, so that man is not moved by it beyond measure. (qu. One of the Virtues, Articles 4 & 10) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 12, Section 2)*

66. Father Bartelemi of the Martyrs: Alas that there are few, to whom it happens that they reach up to here! For a light love, a small affection with which one is attached to a mortal creature, an idle word, or a crumb of bread taken differently than it should be, and other similar things, even though they are only chaff, make it so that God, who is the sovereign purity, can unite himself intimately [*He is speaking only about the fleeting union.*] to the soul, until that is expiated: indeed even in the time of union between God and the soul, one must chase away all kinds of images however good, because these are surroundings between the two. (*Summary*, Part 2, Chapter 11) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 20)

#### FATHER BENEDICT OF CANFELD

67. This destitution by its first effect of purification, purges the soul, particularly over every other impurity, of a secret image of the will of God that it always held back, which is the second mistake of contemplation, which is spoken about in the Fourth Chapter: which image was so subtle, fine and spiritual, that in the interior will the soul never takes notice of it, but is persuaded that purely, and without species or image, it contemplated this will in its essence; and even

it could never take notice of this image, until it had been purged of it; in that an imperfect thing is not known as imperfect to him who knows nothing more perfect: But the soul knew nothing more perfect; because this image is the highest and purest thing that it had ever contemplated: and consequently it could not know it as imperfect although when it has been purged, it has known to have been so. If one asks how it is undone of this image, since it does not know it; I answer that it is by the fire of love, which however is a divine operation and not it's, and in which it is more passive than active. (*Rule of Perfection*, Book 3, Chapter 6)

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

68. It sometimes happens that we have no comfort in the exercises of sacred love, in that like singing deaf people we do not hear our own voice, nor can enjoy the sweetness of our song; but on the contrary, beyond that we are pressed by a thousand fears, troubled by a thousand rackets that the enemy makes around our heart, suggesting to us that perhaps we are not agreeable to our Master, and that our love is useless: - then we toil not only without pleasure, but with an extreme boredom, seeing neither the good of our work, nor the contentment of him for whom we are toiling. But what increases the evil on this occasion is that the spirit and highest point of reason cannot give us any relief for this poor superior portion of reason, being completely surrounded by suggestions that the enemy makes to it, it is even alarmed and finds itself busy enough to be surprised by any consent to evil, so that it cannot make any departure [*This is what I called (in the Short Method, Chapter 19, Number 1) not combating the temptations directly by departing from ones depths in order to see what is happening on the outside; for that is very dangerous.*] in order to disengage the inferior portion from the spirit. And even though it has not lost courage, it is yet so seriously attacked, that if it is without guilt, it is not without pain. For as a cap to its boredom, it is deprived of the general comfort that one almost always has in all the other evils of this world, which is the hope that they will not be able to lose, and that one will see the end of it, and consequently be alleviated by hope. The faith residing in the point of the spirit, certainly assures us, that this trouble will end, and that we will enjoy a day of rest; but the greatest of the sound and the cries that the enemy makes in the rest of the soul, almost prevents the advice and demonstrates from being understood: and in our imagination there remains only this said portent: Alas, I will never be happy!

[*Pure Love*, Number 36] O God, my dear Theotime, but it is then that one must testify to an invincible faithfulness toward the Savior, serving him purely for the love of his will, not only without pleasure, but among this deluge of sadness, horrors, frights and attacks; like his glorious Mother and St. John did on the day of his passion, which among so many blasphemies, sorrows and mortal sadness remain firm in love, even when the Savior having withdrawn all his holy joy into the summit of his spirit, poured out neither any alleviations, nor any consolations whatsoever in his divine face, and his languishing eyes covered by the darkness of dark, no longer cast but glances of pain, like also the Sun of rays of horror and frightful darkness. (*On the Love of God*, Book 9, Chapter 11)

He recounts what happened during the deliverance  
Of St. Peter from prison: then he adds:

69. It is the same with a soul greatly laden with interior troubles: For even though it has the power to believe, hope in and love God, and even though in reality it would do so; it does not yet have the force to discern if it believes, hopes in and cherishes its God, in that distress occupies and overwhelms it so strongly, that it cannot make any return into itself in order to see what it does: that is why it is advised to it that it had neither faith, nor hope, nor charity, but only apparitions and useless impressions of those virtues, that it feels almost without feeling them and like strangers, not like domestics (servants) of the soul. If you are watchful, you will find that our spirits are always in the same state, when they are powerfully occupied by some violent passion; for they do several actions as if in a state of dreaming, and for which they have so little feeling, that it is almost no longer advised to them that it is in truth that the things happen.

Such then are the feelings of the soul, which is among the spiritual agonies, which make the love extremely pure and clean: for being deprived of every pleasure, through which it (the love) can be attached to its God, it joins and unites us to God immediately, will to will, heart to heart, without any intervention by contentment or pretension. Alas, Theotime, the poor heart is afflicted, when as abandoned by love, it looks everywhere and does not find it, so it seems to it. It does not find it in the exterior senses, for they are not capable of it; nor in the imagination which is cruelly tormented by various impressions; nor in the distressed reason of a thousand obscurities of discourses and strange apprehensions; and even though finally it finds it in the summit and highest region of the spirit, where this divine affection (love) resides, if it nevertheless does not fail to recognize it, and is advised that this is not it, because the greatness of the troubles and darkness prevent it from feeling its sweetness: It sees the love [*See the Explanation of the Canticle*, Chapter 2, Verse 9] without seeing it, and meets it without knowing it, as if that were in a dream or image. So Magdalene having met her dear Master does not receive any relief from that, in that she did not think that it was he, but only the gardener.

But what then can the soul, which is in this state do? It no longer knows how to keep itself in its position among so many troubles, and no longer has any strength except to let its will dies in the hands of the will of God, in imitation of sweet Jesus, who have arrived at the summit of the pains of the Cross, that the Father had plan for it, and no longer being able to resist the extremeness of his sorrows, did like the stag, which out of breath and overwhelmed by the back,

rendering itself unto man, a tear in its eye; for in this way this divine Savior near his death, and letting out his last sighs, and a great cry and tears: Alas, he says [*Luke 23:46*] my Father, I commend my spirit into your hands: the last word of all, and by which the beloved Son gave the sovereign testimony of his love towards his Father. When then everything fails us, when our enemies are in their extremity, this word, this feeling, this renouncement of our soul into the hands of our Savior, cannot fail us. The Son commended his spirit to the Father in this last and incomparable distress; and we, when the convulsions of spiritual pains take away from us every other kind of relief and means of resisting, [*Total surrender without return; this is the end for which God makes us suffer so many pains.*] commend our spirit into the hands of this eternal Son, who is our true Father, and lowering the head of our acquiescence to his good pleasure, let us deposit our will in him. (*On the Love of God*, Book 9, Chapter 12)

#### FATHER CONSTANTINE OF BARBANCON

70. Finally, after several small tests, God seeing the strong and courageous soul entirely denuded of the affection of the earth, and resolved to follow him everywhere, even though that can cost it pain and fatigue, and never abandoning him, however hard and austere he shows himself to be against it; over everything God knowing that its strong enough to support the operation that he wants to perform in it: he gives it a secret inclination to restore and surrender itself to him, and to fling itself entirely into his divine position, in order to do with it according to his good-pleasure for the time and eternity, desiring only to humor him at any price: And after having extracted its total consent [*Total surrender without return; this is the end for which God makes us suffer so many pains.*], he begins to put it in a state in which it must suffer extremely.

But, in that this state of deprivation is one of the most troublesome, and the most arduous passages of all the spiritual life, to which God being accustomed to weigh down the soul down to the end of its forces, and to give it as much as it can bear, and because of the invisible pain that there is in pursuing this path, without letting oneself be carried away to the things of the outside; I will deal with it here a little more fully than with the other states.

When you hear about this state of Deprivation and desertion, one must not think that God afflicts the soul directly, or even though he puts it in a state of pure suffering, where it has only to suffer and wait better without anything else, like it did formerly; for if the thing consisted only of that, there would not be any great mystery. But God deprives it firstly of all the superior operations of the spirit, and of all the occupations with his divine love that it usually had, putting it back in the basest of the inferior powers, where it finds itself so filled with self, so distanced from the divine region, that it feels the operations of God only very little or not at all. And where as in the previous state, its exercise was to keep itself completely recollected on the inside in peace, repose and tranquility of spirit, occupying itself with nothing except to follow, await and notice the interior lure of actual grace in order to cooperate in it: here being extremely distanced from all peace and tranquility, its former miseries return, the passions are felt once again and as keenly as ever, and it seems to the soul that it will not have less pain in overcoming them than the first day when it set out on the path of perfection.

It seems that the King-Prophet felt a similar distancing from the divine joy and the bad effects, which follow from it, when he said [*Psalms 10:1*]: Lord, you therefore moved away from me? Why, my God, have you thus deprived me of the happiness of your enjoyment, like a poor widow deprived of the gentle company of her spouse, which widow being attacked and afflicted on all sides, finds no one who protects her? Just like the Devil, the world, the flesh seemed to raise themselves in concert against this soul, thus removed from the presence and the company of its heavenly Husband, under the helpful wings of whom it formerly seemed to be able to have all things, and even brave all those who raise themselves against it. It then said [*Psalms 22:4 (or 23:4 KJV)*]: I will fear no evils, because you are with me. I mock the threats of enemies, I disdain their insolence; and what is more, reinforced by constancy and greatness of courage, I present myself to combat, and fear nothing: for God having taken my life in protection, and covering me on all sides with the winds of his power, who will dare attack me. Whom will I fear, if he whom everyone fears and dreads defends me? Nothing could then shake it; for the sole reason that it's Lord and its God was near it, victory was in its hands. But here being this abandoned, it can certainly say with the Prophet: [*Psalms 70:10-11 (or 71:10-11 KJV)*] Alas Lord! Those who seek only my death, who conspire against my life, made a plot together, where they decided upon my ruin, saying with an audacious bold voice: He roams, deprived of the assistance and the gentle protection of his God; pursue him, attack him hardly, because no one will be found who will take up his cause, or who can tear him away from you. And in effect, he is saying [*Psalms 93:17 (or 94:17 KJV)*] if God had not assisted me, so little would be necessary for my soul to fall into hell. Which is to say, these plans would have had their outcome, if God by his mercy had not promptly turned himself towards me to help me? That is why he prayed so often. [*Psalms 26:9 (or 27:9 KJV)*] Do not turn your face away from me. [*Psalms 50:13 (51:12 KJV)*] Do not move me aside from in front of your face. O Lord, deprive me no longer of your agreeable presence, lest my enemies once again conspire for my loss.

What spiritual martyrdom do you think that this is for a soul, after having seen the things of the spirit of God so clearly, and know their truth, the vanity of the things of the world, the misery of the desires and inclinations of corrupted nature, and the great misfortune of sin; after having so many times desired to distance oneself from all these things, and what is more, after it thought itself to be as distanced from that as the heaven is from the earth, to see oneself there yet again, completely plunged in, and harassed and tormented by thoughts, desires, inclinations, imaginations,

movements, passions and finally by all sorts of dissoluteness as much as it has even been? Even if that lasted only the period two, three or four months, and that the soul returned after that to its enjoyment, the thing would not in the least be bearable; but to remain there half a year or even whole years, or more, no longer knowing how to return to the previous graces, that almost makes the soul lose all hope, and carries away what little remains of its patience. For if it wants to be elevated to God in order to seek refuge from its miseries, there is only darkness and obscurity in its spirit, and it sees that the door is closed to it on that side; if it has recourse to its own actions in order to exercise the opposite virtues, that is done with so little effectiveness against its hurt, that it finds as little or no relief on that side. Where then will this poor creature have recourse in its agonies? For if it must do something: To remain in self in its inferior nature with all these misfortunes, inclinations, chaos is like a hell for it, which had formerly learned to remove itself from that so well, helped by the operation that it felt in its spirit, where it saw so clearly the misery of this chaos: that is why its conscience cannot endure stopping there again, or being able to find no repose or consolation there: being always gnawed on the inside by the fear that it is given of losing its God, by letting itself be carried away to the things of the outside. And in effect this is one of its greatest pains that it seems to it at every moment that it is going to be pulled backed from its God and abandoned.

But will you say what then does Our Lord claim by all that? Why such a state? I answer that this is an operation as much necessary as any other that God has done in the soul up to now, in order to have it advance in his divine love: it is necessary, I say, not only in order to purify the soul of every bit of sin, of every attachment to his sentient graces and of all esteem for itself; but still in order to dispose it little by little to the state of enjoyment and perfect union, which must follow after this one, as will be seen at the end of this discourse.

The soul then having for sometime been in this state of spiritual barrenness, in these combats, in these feelings of all kinds of miseries, and having born this hard deprivation with patience, in the hope of finding better: seeing finally that these mysteries or rather augment day by day, it begins to imagine that all is lost for it, and that this happened to it by some great error that it committed against God, and which obliged him to draw back from it and let it be in such a miserable state. And the further that goes, the more it is a pity to see the pains that it has in prayer, because of the difficulty that it finds in entering into its interior, and keep itself there or address itself to God such little effectiveness; and to see that the time passes in various thoughts, representations and allures of sensuality. And what is more, it happens often that the impatience wants to make itself felt: for the inferior nature seeing itself thus agitated on all sides, deprived of all influence and help, and that all things conspire toward its ruin, it would like to quit everything because of impatience. And instead of the gentle inclinations that it felt formerly for God, and for his love, it is almost unbelievable how much at present it feels completely full of disgust, aversion and resignation, and that in such a way that one no longer sees any remedy to it; the things always going from bad to worse. For while there was still some room to hope, to bear or to be resigned, whatever difficulty the soul found there, there was always a means to advance in some way: but since this inferior nature finds itself wholly filled with impatience, rage, resignation, resentment and indignation, that is chaos and inexplicable confusion: and it is a horrible thing to feel how in this rage and impatience of the nature, having become unbearable to itself, it is bound and provoked against the spirit, indeed even against God, seeing itself entirely left to self and deprived of every support and every comfort.

Have you ever seen an enraged dog, which not being able to reach the one who is striking it, takes it out on the stick, which it is beaten with? It is like this that this nature humiliated to the end, forsaken entirely, completely filled with spite and anger, rage and impatience, seems to want to band against God, and against everything indifferently, without any regard for what it is: but not being able to reach there, it frets, is grieved and resentful against itself in the excess of the anguish which it sees itself overwhelmed with.

And note that this soul is then so much all nature, which is to say, wholly living in the nature, that its interior is completely depicted by these forms, nothing appearing in it but that, all the rest and all the other superior faculties being for then being made supple, hidden and without any operation, there remaining in it no little corner where all this nature is not disorderly, so that the soul can almost not distinguish itself from that, or stop itself from believing that it is itself and its will, which does, which wants and which operates everything that it feels: from where there comes to it an infinity of doubts, scruples and anxieties, thinking that all these things which happen to it are completely pure wishes and consents. But much is necessary for that: for the true superior will is as much distanced from it as when it was among the divine infusions; except only that it does not have its operations but in hand, or a use of its freedom as full as in these happy moments of former times.

As for the rest the nature feeling itself so intolerable to self, and full of rage and anger against God himself, the soul must distinguish itself from this nature, and not thrust oneself completely into what one feels in it; but one must see it endure the everything like a third part, uniting itself to the divine operation, and saying at the same time; May this wicked part die, may it die with all its rage: and sometimes by insulting it with great courage: Despite you, your will, and everything you could contradict, it will be done thus, you will die and be annihilated. At other times, feeling itself thus distinguished from it, one can let it do a little according to its inclination perversity and spite, not in order to consent to it; but to consider it only, and to see in what the tragedy of its spite will terminate.

Finally the thing goes so far, and this poor soul finds itself so overwhelmed, that seeing itself in so much agony, in such great danger of offending Our Lord, and in such great peril, it seems to it, of leaving everything and turning around, it feels itself pushed to want to implore divine mercy in order to be delivered from this sad state: But in that this

instinct, completely beautiful in appearance and founded on so many pressing reasons, is in effect only a characteristic of the nature, which would certainly like to avoid its spiritual death, and take itself away from this such bitter operation of divine love; I will here say to the soul, in order to encourage and support it against this infirmity, which perhaps be able to serve as precaution and consolation for it.

Tell me then, o devoted soul, which finds yourself reduced into this poor state and into this great interior desolation, do you not remember how deserving and agreeable to God are the meditation of the death and the sufferings of Our Lord? You will tell me. If then the only mediation, which happens in the single thought, is such, how rightly [*It is certainly more to bear the states of Jesus Christ, than to consider the states of Jesus Christ, says the Short Method, Chapter 8, Number 1.*] will the likeness and conformity to this death be so?

When you went about meditating on these sacred mysteries, you considered only the exterior of the corporeal and visible things which passed through there, occupying you there praise ably in exaggerating the torments and sorrows of your beneficent Savior; but not he will teach you something else: for here you will begin to know by the experience of what you will feel, that what he suffers interiorly in his soul, by the total desertion that his sacred Humanity endured, has been to him much more arduous and painful than all the rest which appeared on the outside; and so you will learn a way of contemplating these sacred mysteries more sublime than you have ever practiced, by henceforth considering the interior agonies of his soul, rather than the exterior wounds of his body. Even more; you will keep him company in his interior sufferings, by enduring all these torments in imitation of him; and so you will be much more agreeable to him than if you had always stopped to contemplate and consider them through exterior images.

And consequently because you feel strongly incited to ask Our Lord that he be pleased to deliver you from this pain and such agonizing state, this is the place where you can become just like Our Lord in the Garden of Olives, when he began to enter into his painful passion, where his sacred Humanity found itself in such extreme desolation, that according to its inclination it began to cry out: [*Matthew 26:39*] My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Your nature says as much at the beginning of this state, desiring to avoid such a difficult labor, which, to what it anticipates, comes to melt on it. But be on guard, I beseech you, to want or pray absolutely, that God delivers and draws you back from this state; For I can assure you, that if you want to be among the number of true friends of Our Lord, this operation must run its course, it must be achieved and accomplished entirely in you, even though it costs the nature. Courage them! This is the purgatory of love, where you will pay everything which remains for you to pay off your debts: this is the true test of your constancy, and of your courage to preserve in the service of Our Lord; this is the time to come out from it to the outcomes of your offers, of your abandon to God, and of the desires to endure something for him, that you addressed to him when you asked him for his divine love. Where now are these, such liberal offers of a wholly disinterested love, and the sacrifice of all yours, that you made to God in the time of the enjoyment of his Spirit? Where are all these, such generous promises, resolutions and protestations that you made at that time to never abandon him, however troublesome and austere that he showed himself to be? This is the time where you were supposed to show that you are not the friend of words, but of many works and effects. And as Our Lord, for your good, did not want to avoid his death and bitter passion: so in this encounter, where he goes as much from his glory, and where his divine will appears so visibly, even though according to your natural appetite you longed to avoid the toilings of this state, do not yet yourself be carried away to the desire of nature; but be persuaded that it is expedient that your being, your operating, and everything corrupted or imperfect in you, die, in order to give room to the divine being, to his suressential operating, and to everything which is of his pure love. Wish them that all that perish sooner and that this inferior nature dies with all its spite, in defiance of its rage, its impatience and everything it could want to the contrary; and say to God: May your will be done, in longing that his divine operation be accomplished, and that all the rest is adapted to it, rather than wanting this divine operation to be conformed to the desires of the nature.

I certainly know that often even you cannot do this resignation by any formed act; for even that will be taken away from you, just as every other act of virtue that you would sometimes like to train in need, it is not then being possible to form any, or to practice anything which is capable of giving you any satisfaction or assurance of yourself of having done what was in you in order to set you against evil. But try to remain in peace, in quietude and in silence: and that will keep room in you for a good resignation, even though you would not know how to do it explicitly. For God is not contented with words, or lightly formed deeds: but he wants one to be genuinely and effectively what these acts declare, by remaining peaceful and content in one's depths among so many miseries; and that is enough for him, even though we see ourselves deprived of this contentment that we would like to have, to see ourselves form these acts.

Be then really and truly resigned, pacific and content, praising and blessing God in your hear in all his works; it is this way even when you say nothing, that he will hear you enough; and learn starting now to live in this way with God; For this will henceforth be the way in which you will serve him.

If you ask me, what means are there to preserve oneself in a pacific state and to remain content, in the middle of such a great war, and by feeling so much worry and resignation? I answer that even though it can happen, one must let the everything pass so much, that one may learn to have impatience in the middle of one's impatience, to be resigned in the resignation itself, to be patient in the impatience that one feels from one's impatience, and resigned in the resignation where one finds oneself or the reason for one's resignation. And when you come to see and feel yourself in such a miserable state, that having compassion for yourself because of the interior distress which is so terrible that you must pass it, you will complain to Our Lord about him leaving you without his divine help, and without the assistance



of his grace, in the middle of such great extremeness; it will be then that you will in some way be similar to Our Lord, complaining to God his Father about him having forsaken you.

Besides, be assured that you must be passed all these things exactly and without pretending or exaggerating anything you will see yourself, according to what you think yourself to be, the poorest, most unhappy and desolate creature which can be found on earth; since there is no one so miserable and so unfortunate that he does not receive, either from men, or from God, some support or some small comfort: whereas you will see yourself so distanced from them that it will seem to you that even when some creature, whomever it be, or even God, would like to give you some, you would not know how that could come about, or how it would be possible for you to be raised from such a terrible disaster. And what is still more surprising in that is that even when the soul clearly knows its state, and it knows for certain that this state of poverty and dereliction is the true preparation for the sureminent and divine life; that all that nevertheless cannot easily diminish the violence of its agonies, or relieve its pains as regards the cooperation with this divine work: for this strait is a stroke from the hand of God, and so much from his hand, that no one but him can have the remedy to it. —

The pain of this soul which grieves it among a thousand others is that it thinks in itself: I come to die in this sad state where I feel so little love for God; what would be done with me? -- For if I must speak according to the feelings and the instinct of nature, I feel myself pushed to blaspheme him and murmur something against his divine operation, rather than to want to submit myself humbly to his divine will, to be brought lovingly to bless him, glorify him and love him. For even though I may do something similar, may resign myself, may surrender and annihilate myself before him and humble myself under his divine operation, all that is not done with a full will and entire consent of my inferior part, but rather by force and in spite of myself, being almost coerced to it by the divine will. What would be my fate then? Or what would I become if I came to die in this state? How would I dare present myself before Our Lord with such a disposition of my soul? Whereas if I was dead in the previous state, completely full of desire and love for God, what would my contentment have been and how great my assurance of dying in love and loving in dying.

Yes, dear soul, it is certainly true that there is nothing happier than to die to loving: but however that was not yet the most perfect love. I believe truly during that time you could have died with more confidence in God than now; you would also have been after death to see that this love, which seemed so sincere, so pure, so perfect to you, was still soiled and mixed with human imperfections, because the divine operation had not been received by me in the purity that was necessary: whereas dying in this state, you died leaning, not on your own merits, since you do not attribute any to yourself; nor on your own industry or address, since you would not know how to have any; nor on the faithfulness of your cooperation, since it seems to you that this operation is taken away from you: but on the promise only of the heritage of the children of God, and on the merits alone of the blood of your Savior: and dying with so little confidence in yourself, you would certainly be surprised to find yourself so rich in merits, so abundant in graces, and so filled with gifts and spiritual riches.

Moreover know that in the previous state, even though you lived there in such great assurance, because of the love that you felt for God, you were always the same as you are now, and just as imperfect as you find yourself to be at present. In the spite, the rage and the misery of your nature to not appear there in your eyes, in order to be hidden and almost buried under the abundance of so many divine favors, God nevertheless does not fail to see it and to melt the most intimate parts of your depths, not overlooking what degree of virtue and death to yourself you had reached: and now, in order to make you know it too, and to take away from you this vain assurance and all self esteem, he just perceptibly removed from you the help of his divine operation, so that you may see clearly what you are truly. Die then fearlessly in this state, since knowing yourself so well, you die in distrusting entirely yourself and all your own merit. (*Secret Paths of Divine Love*, Part 2, Chapter 10)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

71. All the good of this soul lies in strongly enduring the laborious efforts of its removal, patiently awaiting the desired return of the Husband, when it pleases him to do so: and never must one seek one's comfort in the created. If one does outside in order to amuse oneself in something, that better be absolutely necessary. Finally one must die in eternal agony, (if God orders it to be thus) rather than making oneself unfaithful to his divine Majesty from however far away. This genuine loss is hard only in the beginning, namely, for the young apprentices; for it is easy in the middle, and very gentle at the end. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 11)

72. As for the dead that God himself makes suffer, in the total suspension of power, which tightly bound, are without power and without movement, and that often times so agonizingly that there is no pain like it: such are the death and agonies of the last degree and state of the active appetite, which the Mystics have written about amply, and me too. About which I say that the excellent righteousness in men are unknown, in that there is no moment in life, where it is not necessary to expire in God. — Such were the deaths and sorrows of Job, and the sad and sorrowful moans that they produced, showed them enough such as they were; namely the most cruel and horrible which can be imagined. About which one has reason to be shocked to see that even many scholars are ignorant of this, and that its mortal excesses are explained very ignorantly against all reason and true feeling of spirit. If God had not justified him himself above, men would have condemned him with madness and blasphemy. This is what it is to be ignorant of the learning of the Saints,

and to not have experience in it; not knowing that Job [*I believe I have left nothing to be explained about these states, in what I wrote on Job (See Volume VII of the Explanations on the Old Testaments.)*] was at the same time profoundly tormented, in his spirit as well as in his body. All his moans were nothing but a continual excess of loving sorrow; and the more he seems to have lost and exceeded reason toward God, all the more and all the better does he express by his moanings, the love which tormented him more cruelly than one can imagine. For in his universal abandonment, he did not know where to seat his foot, which is to say his appetite, in order to be able to take repose in self, or in the creatures; so besieged was he on all sides, in the soul and in the body, by very strong pains and agonies. To which his friends joined themselves, especially his wife, with their reproach and mockery, in order to succeed at filling his misery: for their word served only to torment him more.

The same happens everyday to the most intimate friends of God: some are tormented in the spirit and the body, others are forsaken without feeling, comfort or knowledge in the spirit; so that in their infernal languishings, they sometimes come forth to strange excesses by words: which being ignored by men, they judge them to be mad. But divine men, who have themselves passed through this horrible and frightful desert, judge them very differently. They consider them to be as holy in that itself as they are injured in the proper exercise of God, which is a very mortal excess to them, expressing by the words the violence of the torments of love, which radically suppresses in them the life of an inconceivable manner. Therefore their expressions are as distanced from their true state, as they are then unknowingly lost in God. Even the very holy men are ignorant of the exercises of God in the minds of his most intimate friends: that is why they condemn these poor afflicted people, as a thing, which has never been anything to God. It is these people who in their torments cannot be consoled, and the consolation of even the spirituals increases their torments more and more. If their bodies [*Sometimes it is like this, as I proved. (See the Life of the Author Part I, Chapter 25, Number 3)*] were afflicted, that would be the most pitiful thing which can be thought of: but usually his Majesty leaves the body free; and if it pleases him to afflict the body excessively, he leaves them free in spirit, in order to occupy themselves with him, receiving his loving caresses in his frequent visits, which fill them with joy and ineffable light, while the body is held under the squeezing pains. God has care of them, and he even seems to be afflicted with them, giving them courage, either before affliction, or in the affliction itself in order to sustain them strongly. It is in this kind of excellent Saints [*Who will accuse the chosen of God? It is he himself who justifies them. (Romans 8:33) There are servants of God who are approved up to a certain point; because their state does not pass the reach of a certain human, scholarly reasonable, pious and upright comprehension: but as soon as one enters into states which surpass this enlightened reason, one enters into weariness. One should judge these people not by reason, but above reason, and one should think that a state which has such good and incontestable beginnings, a wholly divine end, must not be condemned in particular things, which by themselves can be taken in good part and which in God have a divine sense, like what is reported about St. Teresa (in her Life written by the Bishop of Tarassone, Chapter 19) that God told her: My daughter if I had not created Heaven, I would create it for you alone: which would signify an extreme ostentation, taken from the side of reason. God sometimes makes use of the most profound and divine things in himself, in order to express to his Wives the love that he brings them and the plans that he has for them. These things taken to the letter will always create difficulty; but taken in the true sense in which they were said and in the use that God makes of them, are completely different. If one knew the profound and intimate communications, which take place between God and the soul, one would be shocked by the goodness that God has for his poor creatures; and I am amazed that they do not die with love. God places his interest in their hands, as they placed all of theirs in him, and seems sometimes to oblige them to dispose of his justice and his mercy. But my Love! Am I not saying too much for a person who is deemed guilty? But what does it matter, provided that all your rights are preserved and your truth is neither betrayed nor weakened. If the fear, o my Love, could make self interest enter into this heart, this ungrateful heart would have to be torn away and punished eternally.] that God takes his sovereign delights on earth.*

Very often it is necessary to know that the more one becomes spirit, the less one is powerful against oneself; so that only very difficulty can one on the inside and the outside do everything one did beforehand very willingly and very easily. The inferior part revolts against the superior: this is only bad feelings, and movements of appetites and passions which have revolted against God and virtue, which is so strange to feel and to see that one believes oneself to be lost. Then to move a little straw seems like moving a balk; and finally one cannot image the horrible flurry of such a strange accident, God keeping this terrible means in order to achieve purifying and purging the soul of its most subtle properties. If man is not courage – (See Mortification, Number 9) (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 13)

73. See Naked Faith, Number 44.

74. As for the rest there can be found people attracted by God, in their beginnings, strongly enough in the mystic mist, who in their suspension and obscurity are contemplating the Divinity, by a mystic operation, rather than purely doing prayer. But as it happens that in this suspension they find themselves anguished, and more or less dying on the inside, hardly can they be persuaded of what or where they are. The reason is, that the nature always wants to feel and know; and this is the property only of consummated Saints, to be lost entirely, by a total indifference [*Entire indifference: perfection.*] to having or not having, to being or not being. So well that, when the Directors encounter such subjects, that is not a small pain to them; because even though they see them and judge them very well, it always

seems to these souls that they never tell them what they are; and if they are not careful, they afflict them more than they console them. From this such immediate conduct of God succeeds the exercise of the creatures, which striking wrongly and incessantly, keep these poor people in mortal and infernal languishings: so well that it is marvelous how a poor creature [*Many quit from a lack of courage: and often the Directors rebuke and abandon these souls.*] can for such a long time resist so much and so many bad outcomes. Therefore it is those who are bitter, spite themselves and quit everything, abhorring forever the life of the spirit: and what would command them to practice it all their life would put them in a living hell. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 2)

75. Before arriving at the consummation, which is the last and supreme state of this path, and which, like the others, contains several degrees of sur-eminence, the soul must pass an infinity of straits, sometimes interior and gross pains, at other times poverty and miseries, by the retreats that the Husband makes with the senses, and [*Note*] never with the spirit, sometimes abstractions of itself and created things. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 5)

Presupposing that one is well established in the rules and maxims of the very divine, very eminent and very abstract path, which consists of a total death and annihilation of all things, as well as of self, and supposing that one is very distanced, and eminently abstracted from everything which is, and everything which could be; I will say only that in times of very great desolation and interior languishing, that God makes the soul feel, exerting in it and with it the divine work of his love, it must be careful to complain to no one, or to seek any comfort on the outside among the creatures under the pretext of indifference, or any other thing. It will not be permitted for it to do any reading during that time; that would be to secretly deliver itself from the loving gibbet: except the obedient charity or necessity expressly direct it's differently. However when it is not attached in this way, or detained in the gibbet of love, and in the very painful death of the spirit in God, it will be able to read. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 6)

77. The loving gibbet is of two kinds; the first [*First strong test.*] where the soul finds itself hung and strangled, after the very naked, very simple, very divine and very effective attractions and manifestations of the divine essence; touching, drawing and moving the soul to the inside, extending and dilating it in its immense expanse and spaciousness, as if entirely lost itself: after, I say, the progress of such caresses, this same sovereign spirit is accustomed to exerting the divine work of its love in the soul, removing and taking away from it the satisfaction of its divine presence and of its divine delights on the outside and in the senses. That makes it suffer very great and agonizing pains, and even impatience of the spirit, but in love. It remains as if suspended in its power to act, and so deeply drawn and absorbed, that it is almost impossible for it to speak to the exterior or desire to do so. So it is forced to endure with remedy the very interior agonies and pains of love, in that what could come from its own industry, or from some other creature, can do nothing to console it. Therefore it cannot [*The soul feels so keenly the uselessness of human comforts that it even flees them.*] desire to be consoled, or receive consolation; either from itself, or from everything one can do, say higher or more divine. This is the reason for his agonizing and arduous death.

The other [*Second test*] gibbet of the loving soul is completely of a different kind. It finds itself attached to it and strangled much more languishingly and agonizingly without comparison. For after all the degrees of manifestations, of very luminous and very delicious [*He calls sight, communication, because the essence its not seen.*] sights of the divine Essence, and after the faithful practice of all their familiar, gentle and delicious essential and personal caresses, [*This is the reason why it no longer desires through itself: for one must inevitably reason about desire like about the other acts.*] the desire of the soul is overwhelmed in its active and hungering capacity, which makes the soul be very deeply and imperceptibly united and transformed into the divine essence of the sur-essential and sur-eminent Spirit, which by its activity unites it to itself, infinitely beyond all being and non-being.

From that comes that after the soul feels destitute of the similar desire for action and affection, it falls little by little into sadness, agonies, sorrows and fits of impatience of spirit; and it seems to it if it is not well established and instructed, that it no longer has anything from God, or from his divine knowledge, be shocked to see itself having fallen so suddenly and without it being aware in such as extremity of miseries, languishings and death, to have lost, like it fears, its infinite Object and its infinite delights and caresses. It sees itself so ignorant of God, and the things which belong to him, that it believes that there is no one, however miserable it may be, which is as much so as it. From where it comes that its sorrows, agonies and fits of impotence increasing more and more its poverty and desolation, coming to such a point that it would like to be able to die a thousand times. Nevertheless it would certainly like to be delivered from this, not for its interest, it seems to it, but in order to recover its infinite loss [*No one knows such a loss except he who has felt these ineffable delights.*], and consequently its knowledge, its life, its loves and its objective delights. However if it sees that the means, as much on the part of God, as on that of the creature, are lacking for it, [*Sole remedy; resignation, abandon.*] it resigns itself entirely, in order to be forever afflicted and grieved on all sides, indeed even strangled in this gibbet. Which we said will serve as an infallible rule. –

One must note that the offenses committed against God, especially by those who must be perfect, extremely increase their crosses and languishings, making them become more and more impatient inside: and they would love much better then to die to than to live thus detained in such distress and mortal agonies; and for this reason they die and expire completely in God, their divine Object.

If it still happens that the creatures impute something to one of these souls, or give it some mortification against all reason; as its desire and its end are infinitely distanced from the least vice or imperfection it is wonderful if such soul does not then come forth to its justification, and to show to the creatures which afflict it so badly, how purified it is of every created and consequently of all objects, desires and sinister affections. Here are the causes of the loving gibbet of the soul, living only to God and in God, destitute of itself, of its senses and their own operation, and transformed beyond all the created into the sur-eminent and essential unity of God. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 6)

78. In those who being and advance, the temptations proceed particularly from the corrupted habits of their nature, as much superior as inferior: but in the perfect, the temptations are moved and aroused in the non-corrupted inferior part; their superior part being suspended in its acts, by the express order of God. These people have nothing to fear in efforts like this, since consent is as far removed from them, as the efforts, pressures and sorrows [*The sorrow that one feels is the sure sign that the will is removed from temptation.*] are great on those occasions. Nevertheless they must be annihilated and humbled very profoundly above, and report to their Directors about it.

Those who are only beginners [*See Short Method, Chapter 2, Number 4 & Chapter 19, Numbers 1-2*] must not in the least dispute or struggle against their temptation, for to dispute, debate, or reflect on themselves, thinking by these means of pushing back temptation, or of seeing that if they did not give consent to them, that would be to do nothing but horses nipping at their feet, and put themselves in danger of being bitten. Neither must one worry about these violent flurries, except if one hears a pack around oneself of barking watch dogs; or if one saw a large swarm of buzzing bees pass back and forth before one's eyes. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 2, Chapter 2, Number 2)

79. As for the difference between those who are temporally [*Spiritual hell*] damned and those who are so eternally, it is to be supposed that immortal soul cannot fully enjoy God, or the lights of its living life, except by the suppression and extinction of its mortal dying life: which I do not hear the soul which is living here below say about the true divine life. But I say that in this mortal body the purgation of the souls, which convert themselves deliberately to God, is done not so much as such, but by infinite agitations of temptations, as by so much impetuous thunders, very violent efforts and mortal and irreconcilable wars; so that all that time they do not know if they are in the grace of God or not: it seems to them that they are in Hell, rather than on earth in a mortal body.

They fight [*From where it comes that having said that it was not necessary to directly fight the temptations, but suffer and scorn them, he says here that the soul fight? The greatest fight that the soul can give to its enemies is suffering and resignation.*] against so much and such strong enemies, whom it is pressed and surrounded by as much on the outside as on the inside, that it seems that they have entirely lost heart and courage in their good purpose: and all their powers and agitated and occupied by such thick darkness, miseries, confusion and chaos, that they think in the middle of all this impetuosity, they that have forgotten and forsaken God. In this languishing they consider themselves the pray of devils, not being able to discern if they are resisting or not, for the great vehemence of their efforts; which happens often in this term of desolation, that they come to the last degree of hope in the mercy of God. That is done in this way, as much for the horror that they have conceived for all their miserable past life, as for not consenting to the suggestions and feelings of the smallest sin which can be imagined: For these souls are as removed from it as the sadness, deaths and agonies which agitate them, are big. Now if these sad and wicked events, if these continual and infernal languishings, are for a great time the experience of these souls; what will be the sorrows, wars, languishings, agitations and oppressions of the temporal Hell, which surround and assail a soul on all sides like impetuous waves, produced and cast from a sea full of storms, torments and infernal storms? Without doubt one cannot express the least of the mortal pains of these souls so miserably damned temporally. I say damned; [*Terrible state in that it seems to them to be truly so, and they no longer known any distinction, it seems to them, between the temporal and the eternal Hell; between damnation and purgation. For as we said, they are so extremely filled with darkness, and outraged by all sorts of pains in the senses, that they have forgotten God, it seems to them, in themselves.*]

Nevertheless even though that happens in this way for their purgation, they do not forget God: they imperceptibly hope in him, by the force of his Spirit, even in the strongest part of their damnation. Still less must one think that they come to the point of blaspheming his holy Name; though in truth they during all that time believe they are truly damned; and that in that state they do what they do in Hell against them in order to torment their accomplices heaping on them pile upon pile of intolerable torments. But they will differ from those which are entirely damned, in that they do not lose the memory of God, nor the hope to see him one day; although this feeling is very simple, and certainly removed for them from their sight, because of their incomparable sufferings.

But one needs to know which [*It is the great sinners who are punished so rigorously by the Devil, according to this passage of Apocalypse (or Revelations) [16:19, 18:6]: Make him drink down to the dregs of the cup; give back to him the double of his prostitution. The great sinners are punished by all the places, which served in their crimes; that is very certain. God also sometimes obliges very pure souls to deliver themselves for certain sinners or for weak souls; and they suffer the same things as if they had been criminal themselves.*] are the souls, which suffer this infernal purgation? I say that they are the ones which have committed a very great number of mortal sins: this is why one must not be shocked to see them suffer in this way: considering that this is within the right of the Justice of God, and that it is in this way that he must be satisfied by these soul until the end. All the torments of these poor miserable people are

spiritual, as are the devils, which exert them, in the spirit of vengeance and fury; and no one can comprehend them, except those who suffer them, and the devils that make them suffer them.

As for the rest supposing that such souls come to the point of losing patience in the vehemence of their pains, which is not; I say that even that would be without knowledge and regretful to them; considering that their resignation and their intense love is greatly distanced from their feeling: which love proceeds from justifying and gratifying grace, and operates that secretly in the deepest part of their reasonable appetite, with the secret strength that the Holy Spirit communicates to them with this effect.

We could give as an example of that, those who are greatly vexed by violent and very sharp sicknesses, which penetrate and afflict all the parts of the body at the same time, so that for the great vehemence of their unbearable sorrows, they cry out chaotically, and seem to lose patience and even despair. Nevertheless one must not think that they lose patience or despair for that, seeing that the will and the reasonable appetite do not reject these torments, but accept them willingly, though secretly and without their knowledge, by a keen and secret resignation to the will of God, letting him do with them everything he wants, as much and as long as it pleases him. One sees that this is likely, in that after such sorrows, and even while they go on, if they are asked, if they do not want to take patience in their hurts for the love of God, in order to satisfy his will, resigning themselves to suffer lovingly and patiently as long as it is possible for them, they answer frankly with a yes. With all the more reason must one believe the same with the souls, which are severely damned according to their senses in a temporal Hell; for as we said, they are perfectly resigned to the good-pleasure of God, at whatever cost and can never forget him.

On the contrary the blasphemies, the execrations and the despairs of those who are eternally damned are voluntary; and as soon as they saw themselves judged to eternal damnation, their perverted will is unfortunately carried to hate God mortally, and to blaspheme him knowingly during eternity, with a rage, which is the effect of divine justice.

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It is not like this with those who are damned only temporally: for even though they may be violently agitated and tormented in their senses by the devils, in their temporal Hell, they do not at the same time suffer [*Usually*] the pain of the damned; and the grace of God, which secretly operates in them the desire to satisfy Justice, makes them not fear this pain at all, because of their love and their charity toward God. Nevertheless after this violent purgation they begin to suffer the pain of the damned, but temporally; and that in the force of a very perfect love, which they acquired by this purgation, with the very perfect knowledge of self, and of all the required virtues in the perfect love of God. For then this temporal damnation consists of a pain, that I can rightly name the pain of the damned, which causes them languishings, sighs, moans and intolerable pains. But all that is from love into love and for love, because they see themselves again so moved away from the full and unitive enjoyment of the clear and beatific vision of God. There is therefore an infinite difference between the damned for eternity and the damned for a time.

In this same temporal Hell there are various sorrows of afflictive and purgative pains, and each one is purged there differently according to its demerits. Those who are purged and afflicted in the least degree, have more love for more knowledge or more feeling from God, and desires to satisfy him, than the others, who are so for their enormous sins; which is done in proportion to the charity, the grace of God and the perfection of spirit acquired in this life.

One must still know that different is the good of the purgation of the soul in its senses, and different that of the purgation by the pain of the damned. In the first the devils perform the office of executioner and ministers of the justice of God. In the other they have no access to it; but the souls, which are detained there, have great degree of the future glory, that they long for very ardently; being there consoled and visited [*These consolations finish their torment.*] more abundantly than can be expressed. —

From this entire one sees in what the displeasure of those who are temporally damned, differs from the displeasure of those who are so eternally. That of the first, has as a subject God and his enjoying love; the other has as a subject in these accursed and unfortunate people, the love for themselves, who in order to see themselves deprived of the sovereign good, that they desire naturally and could certainly obtain, enrages them forever from not being able to be destroyed or suppress their life by death.

Add to this, that the displeasure of the good comes about from the suffering of divine passions in them in all ways, except those that we expressed in our gibbet of love. It is thus, and not differently, that many good souls are damned temporally, after having obtained knowledge of themselves through the purgation of the senses, in order to arrive even before the full enjoyment of their beatific Object, in the sur-essential contemplation of God himself. They are, I say, damned by God in God, through inexplicable pains and sufferings that he himself makes them suffer. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 2, Chapter 2, Number 3)

80. One must be dying [*Admirable passage. What causes so many torments that God makes the soul suffer? This is for itself, in order to make it totally pure; and it is for divine justice, which wants to lose none of its rights; so well that the purity of the divine justice, (which wants everything for God, and which sees only God: for the justice of God is an attribute of God for God himself, which has relation only to him; mercifulness on the contrary is for men;) the justice, I say, before being satisfied is one of the causes of the torment of the soul. It can be satisfied only if the soul is totally purified; for it constantly asks and never says, that is enough: and on another side the impure and weakened soul would not know how to bear such an operation without suffering inexplicable torment.*] for Justice and for your soul, at

every moment rendering your life to God, who wants to have it from you incessantly through this kind of martyrdom. That is pitiful, or to say it better, frightful: and I do not even know if the creatures add anything to it; which would make a double hell. If that is, believe hardly that you are born for great things, I want to say, in order to possess God in the creature. On the order and truth of this foundation you must delight in dying; and as dying is the extremity of all loss, it is in that your life must be found genuine, so that you can say, [*Galatians 2:20*] I live, no longer me, but Jesus Christ lives in me: which will not be entirely true, if you have a single point, on which to lean. It is in this way that the creature passes in God in a wonderful way, and no one knows it, if he does not experience it like you. That is designed for you in your own exercises. But while you can follow them, you will not do a lot; on the contrary, when there is none of that in you, you will do every exercise above, and all the greater and more terrible your suspension will be, all the better you will find yourself to be. It is there where the region of blessed spirits is, the bodies of which spirits no longer lives on earth, except in order to follow them with all their efforts. Such are the pleasures and the life here below of the friends of God. – But without losing yourself so far, think about what you see, in accordance with what you tasted in the infinite nature of God, since you saw and savored it according to your present capacity. If your sight and your thought are one same action to you [*Note sight and thought one same action.*], from there your state is wonderfully divine, outside of you, in sovereign mysticism. What remains for you to do, is to strongly endure the suspension of the sentient assistance of God in your powers. He is not there less than before, but it is in a completely different way; for one can say that now your powers are spirit, like your spirit itself, and from there your simple union is supreme and excellent. If by dint of dying you could be confined to your depths, you would have crossed a great region, and you have already entered far enough into it. It is now a matter of eternity in the same eternity. Now eternity, (which is simple, unique and savory love,) is above time, and ignorant of all vicissitude, -- and its rivers having returned into their sea, are itself. But I fear strongly that there is much distance between your flowing back and this sea. –

As for the rest dispose you to be persecuted for Jesus Christ, and to suffer the slanders, jealousies, envies, flatteries and mortal distractions of false brothers; it is your share, your fate and your heritage. If you have a desire other than that, you are only a sham, hypocrite and delicate servant. And to take your soul as it should be, as Wife promised to Jesus Christ, so much is necessary with her being unfaithful on this point, to deserve the close and true marriage, and the very intimate union with him, instead she deserved only his grace and just indignation. Die then eternally in God, so that he may live eternally in you. (Letter 45)

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS BY MADAME GUION (GUYON)

CONTINUED IN VOLUME 3

**THE JUSTIFICATIONS**

**BY: MADAME JEANNE GUYON**

**VOLUME: 3 OF 3**

**TRANSLATOR & PUBLISHER: PETER-JOHN PARISIS  
1992**

THE JUSTIFICATIONS  
OF MADAME J.M.B. DE LA MOTHE-GUION  
WRITTEN BY HERSELF,  
AND SENT TO THE BISHOPS  
HER EXAMINERS  
WHERE SEVERAL DIFFICULTIES  
WHICH REGARD  
THE LIFE INTERIOR  
ARE ILLUMINATED  
IN THESE THREE VOLUMES  
**VOLUME THREE**

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SECTION 51  
QUIETUDE. TRANQUILLITY. SILENCE

LIMITED POWERS

It is necessary that the strong faith of God present in the bottom of our hearts bring us to bury ourselves strongly within ourselves, welcoming all the senses within, preventing them from spreading without. (Chapter 2, Number 2)

After having pronounced this word “Father,” that they dwell several moments in silence with much respect. (Chapter 3, Number 2)

One sees him as a “Physician”; and one presents to him our wounds so that he may cure them: but always without effort and with a short silence from time to time, so that the silence is mixed with action, augmenting little by little the silence, and diminishing the speech, until finally by force of yielding little by little to the operation of God he gains the upper hand. –

When the presence of God is given, and the soul begins to taste little by little the silence and the repose, this experimental taste of the presence of God introduces the soul into the second degree of prayer. (Chapter 3, Numbers 3-4)

I ask of all, that one never finish the prayer without dwelling for some time at the end in a respectful silence. (Chapter 4, Number 3)

The soul by means of meditation turns wholly within itself, to give its attention to God who is present there. (Chapter 10, Number 2)

What happens to this infant who swallows the milk in peace without stirring? Who could believe that he nourishes himself in that way? However the more he sucks in peace, the more the milk helps him thrive. What will happen, I say, to this infant? It is that he falls asleep in the bosom of his mother: this soul, which is peaceful at the prayer often, falls asleep from the mystic sleep, where all the powers fall silent. (Chapter 12, Number 5)

“**The Lord is in his holy Temple, that all the world dwells in silence before him**” (Habakkuk 2:20); The reason for which the inner silence is so necessary, is that the Word being eternal and essential must, in order to be received in the soul, have a disposition, which relates to what the Word is. (Chapter 14, Number 1)

The outer silence is most necessary to cultivate the inner silence; and it is impossible to go within without loving silence and retreat. –

It takes a small act of effort to pray and to meditate for half an hour, or an hour, if one wasn’t maintaining the unction and the spirit of prayer during the day. (Chapter 14, Number 3)

It is therefore an action, but an action so noble, so peaceful, so tranquil, that it seems to the soul that it is not acting at all, because it is so natural. (Chapter 21, Number 2)

What did Magdalene choose? Peace, tranquility and repose. (Chapter 21, Number 7)

It is necessary “**that all flesh be silent in the presence of the Lord.**” (Zerhariah 2:13) (Chapter 21, Number 11)

St. John reports that “**in Heaven a great silence has come.**” (Revelations 8:1) (Chapter 24, Number 1)

CANTICLE

Pull me close, I say, oh my divine Lover, and we run to you through meditation –

This excellent “perfume” brings about the prayer of meditation, because the senses as well as the powers run to his scent. (Chapter 1, Verse 3)

This soul in this gentle embrace of betrothal falls asleep from the mystic sleep; where it tastes a sacred repose that it had never before tasted. – In the other repose the soul had been well seated in the shadow of its Beloved by confidence: but it had never fallen asleep in His bosom, nor between His arms. It is a strange thing how creatures, even spiritual powers, are eager to pull the soul out of this sweet sleep --, although under the most beautiful pretexts: but the soul is sleeping so soundly that it cannot leave its state of slumber. (Chapter 2, Verse 7)

The sweetness that it tastes within through favorable meditation, invites the soul there enough: but to leave this sweetness within, to find only bitterness outside, is most difficult: other than through meditation, the soul lives and is master of its feelings; but by going outside of itself it dies and is lost. (Chapter 2, Verse 14)

The mistress was so intoxicated by the peace and by the tranquility that she was tasting, that she couldn’t leave this place. (Chapter 3, Verse 2)

The steps on the inside are very beautiful, since the Wife can always advance in God without ceasing to rest. It is the ravishing beauty of this advancement, that it is a true repose, without the repose hindering the advancement, nor the advancement the repose: on the contrary the more one rests, the more one advances; and the more one makes progress, the more the repose is tranquil. (Chapter 7, Verse 1)

As God is always working on the outside, and always resting on the inside; so this soul, which on the inside is supported in a perfect repose, is also all wholly working on the outside. (Chapter 7, Verse 12)

AUTHORITIES

## Section 1. Quietude

St. Dennis

1. See Union, Number 8.

2. Let us at present honor and praise the divine peace with quiet hymns, Lady and Mistress of all society and assembly. For it is she who unites all things, who is the mother and the seamstress of the concord and the natural connection which is in all things. That which fact that all chooses the craving and the desire, as much as she which assemble to them multiplicity divide to a perfect unit, and which maintain in union all the parts of the Universe, that if only otherwise in a continual civil war; to make that all abode in bond agreement set as in the same mansion.

Therefore by the participation of divine peace the first and conciliatory powers and virtues are first united in themselves, and then with each other, and according to the unique and first principle of the peace of all the Universe: and next they unite the things which are below them, first with themselves and then with the others, and finally to the cause and to the unique and universal principle of the peace of all things. And this peace progressing without dividing itself over all the creatures confines, restricts and secures all things like in certain minds which bind and bring together divided things, and does not permit these things to fly off in bits and pieces, separated one from the other, and scattered infinitely, going outside of their bounds, without order, without firmness or solidity, abandoned by God, quitting their union, shuffled all-jumbled-up together with all disorder and all confusion.

Now about this calm and this divine peace that the saintly personage Justus calls silence and an immobile repose in all flowing forth, which knows itself, it is not possible for any creature to say nor to think what it is, nor how it is tranquil and dwells in repose, and what it is like in itself and inside of itself, and how for an eminent reason it is united wholly to itself, and how, whether it turns in on itself, or it goes forth to multiply, it never quits the union to which is particular to it, but it goes outside and it passes through all things, without shifting whole faith from within, by the super-eminence of the union which surpasses all things. But attributing to it even that which is ineffable and unknown, to it (I say), which is above all things, we content ourselves with considering only its participation, which can be heard by thought, and expressed by words. What we will do, as much as it is possible for men, and as much as we ourselves are able to do it being very much inferior to several good and saintly personages.

It is therefore necessary to say first, that divine peace is the cause producing the peace considered even in faith, as much of the universal as of the particular; and it is this peace which tempers all things with each other, by means of their union which is never obscure; by means of which being united and conjoined together without division, without there being any void between two things, they reside nevertheless in the integrity of their species, pure and without being troubled by the mixing of their opposites, and losing nothing of their extreme purity or of their most exquisite union. (See Union, Number 12) (*Divine Names*, Chapter 9)

3. See Naked Faith, Number 3.

4. See Naked Faith, Number 4.

5. See Naked Faith, Number 5.

## ST. AUGUSTINE

6. That if [*This passage can only be understood through contemplation. Here is the title or (synopsis of) the Chapter: simplicity of the heart, a necessary condition to reach God. What the impressions of sensitive subjects make in us? What is this repose and this silence of the heart, where Scripture wants us to keep ourselves in order to arrive at a knowledge of God? How much the agitation that the love of worldly objects produces in us distances us from God?*] your inner eye is dazzled when it wants to give its full attention to things which are so much above the senses, try at least to calm your spirit. [*The Translator adds that most of the time one protests only because one doesn't understand what one is protesting and that the protest all by itself prevents one from understanding, when one would otherwise let enough light to enter into the understanding.*]

*I add that if one could bring to this a docile, neutral and naked heart, which appears from the mountains, in explaining oneself would appear sure-footed.*] No longer contest the truth like you are doing now and defend yourself most against the illusions, [*The Translator adds on the side: One finds God only in the silence, which implies that of the passions, of the imagination and of the senses. Those who have accustomed themselves to work only through their imagination are little able to know God.*] of these coarse ideas, that you have pulled, form the perpetual commerce that we have with that which is corporeal. Put yourself above this alone, and you will be above everything. [*We search for the sovereign unity.*] (Simplicity, Number 6 & Union, Number 16)

Simplicity of nature let us therefore look for it in a perfect "simplicity of heart." [*The Translator adds, speaking of the simplicity of the heart, that it consists of appreciating only God alone, and to not be touched by exterior and*

*sensitive things whose multiplicity divides the heart, and tears it to pieces: that is to say, by all which is not God, since there is only God who is neither contained in space nor subject to vicissitudes.]*

Keep yourself in repose, it tells us in the Scriptures, “and you will know that I am the Lord.” (Psalms 45:11 Douay or 46:10 KJV) It is not in a repose of inactivity and sloth that it wants us to keep ourselves, but in a repose which “puts the calm inside of us by chasing from our heart all things contained in all sorts of spaces and places, and subject to the mutability of time: for it is from there that all our agitations come, and these are the phantoms of which these sort of things filled us, which prevent us from seeing the immutable unity always equal to itself.” [*This is divine.*] (*On True Religion*, Chapter 35)

7. When God rests on the seventh day, he blesses it. One shouldn’t understand this childishly as if he had grown weary from work. The repose of God signifies the repose of those who rest in him: as the joy of a house signifies the joy of those rejoicing inside the house. Thus when the Prophet says that God rested he is very well pointing to those who rest in him, and of which he is himself the repose.

#### HENRY SUSO

8. This naked unity is a forbidding silence, and a tranquil repose, that he alone can have, to whom the true liberty is uncovered without a mixing of any malice. (*Dialogue on the Truth*, Chapter 20)

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

9. Never are the superb and the miser at rest. The poor and humble of spirit conserve in his heart a profound peace.

—  
It is therefore in resisting passions, that one finds peace in the heart, and not in indulging them. Thus peace in the heart is found neither in the carnal man nor in he who is exterior and sensual, but in the servants and spiritual powers. (Book 1, Chapter 6, Sections 1-2)

10. If your conscience is pure you will always be full of joy. The soul, which is thus pure in the bottom of the heart, can suffer much, and its joy is doubled by the worst evils. — You will rejoice in a most gentle repose, if your heart accuses you of nothing. — Those that are mean have no true peace, nor any inner joy, because an oracle of God himself pronounced it, “that there is no peace for the impious.” (Isaiah 57:21)

He, who cares for neither censure nor praise, will have nothing, which troubles the peace of his heart.  
The pure soul lives easily content and peaceful. (Book 2, Chapter 6, Sections 1-3)

11. Oh my soul, come to rest yourself in all things and above all things, in your Lord, because he is the eternal rest of the Saints. (Book 3, Chapter 21, Section 1)

12. The wise and spiritual man does not consider what happens inside of himself, nor on what side the wind of human inconsistency and instability blows; but thinking only of advancing himself in his voice, he welcomes and reunites all the movements of his heart to proceed with them to me like to his unique and to his veritable end. (Book 3, Chapter 33, Section 1)

13. It is you who makes the heart tranquil, and who fills it with peace, and with joy. (Book 3, Chapter 34, Section 1)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

14. See Consistence, Number 7.

15. So the soul seeing that the body for the least divine operation that it feels, would want to throw itself on the ground as if dead, because it knows not how to suffer, not being within its reach; it desires to be in a place where it is subject to nothing; it knows “its prison when it feels some excess of divine love, but not when it knows nothing else there, if not that it is united with God.” [*Note that it is the forces of love, which give desire for death, or the forces of nature and not the peaceful union.*] Still the soul and the body exist and live together, with such a peace and obedience, and with such a silence, that not a single discordant desire is found in either of them; because the body obeys the soul; and the soul, God; in such a way that each of them has what it must, by the highest decree and divine disposition with a great peace. (In her *Life*, Chapter 30)

16. See Mortification, Number 3.

#### ST. TERESA

17. This is a contemplation of the powers within faith to be possessed of this contentment with more judgment: but nevertheless, these powers do not become lost and do not fall asleep: the will alone is occupied so that without knowing

how it stays captive, it alone yields its gladness, in order that God may put it in captivity, knowing well that it is captive of he who it loves. (*Life*, Chapter 14)

18. I already said, that in this first meditation the powers of the soul are not deprived of their operation; but the soul is so content with God, that while this lasts, although the two other powers, to be aware of understanding and memory, are distracted and wondering, nevertheless, the full being united with God, quietude and tranquility is not lost; on the contrary the will recalls little understanding and memory to the mediation: for although it is not yet wholly absorbed within God; if the will is so well occupied, without knowing how, that no matter what effort they make, they cannot despoil it of its gladness. (*Life*, Chapter 15)

19. When quietude is large and lasts a long time, it seems to me that if the will weren't tied to something, it could not last so long in this peace. (Chem. de Perf., Chapter 31)

20. Oh strong and powerful love of God! Ah! That it seems to him that there is nothing impossible to he who loves! Happy soul which has obtained this peace of his God, which Our Lord gives to triumph over all the travails and all the dangers of the world; for it fears none of these in order to do service to such a good Husband! (*Conceptions of the Love of God*, Chapter 3)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

21. That the spiritual person learns to keep himself with a loving expression in God, in tranquility of spirit, when he cannot meditate. – And if he has scruples about doing nothing, that he believes that it is no mere thing to calm the soul, and to hold it in quietude without any action nor any appetite: for this is what Our Lord, through the Prophet, asks of us; “Learn to clear yourself of all matters and you will know favorably that I am God.” (Psalms 45:11 Douay or 46:10 KJV) (*Climbing of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 15)

22. This is why it is better to put the powers in silence, and accustom them to being quiet, so that God may speak. For (as we said), to arrive at this state, it is necessary to love from viewing the natural operations, which is done according to the word of the Prophet, when the soul according to the powers “comes in solitude, and that God speaks to its heart.” (Hosea 2:14) (*Climbing of Mt. Carmel*, Book 3, Chapter 2)

23. That is the soul begins to let itself go the way of tender devotion, it will never arrive at the force of spiritual pleasures, which are found in the nakedness of the spirit thanks to inner meditation. (*Climbing of Mt. Carmel*, Chapter 39)

24. See Proper Operations, Number 15.

25. It is quite true that often when there are some of these most inner and most secret communications in the soul, though the Devil cannot discover which, nor what they are like; never the less because of the long pause and large silence, which these communications cause in the senses and the powers of the temporal sphere, he conjectures from this, that the soul has them, and that it receives some great good. (*Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 2, Chapter 23)

26. So it is necessary to understand, to know how to find that Husband, that the Word together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is essentially hidden in the inner most center of the soul: and consequently the soul which must find it, needs to withdraw from all things created according to the will, and enter into a great meditation within itself, not making more of what is of this world, than what it is. That is why St. Augustine wrote himself in his Soliloquies; “Lord, I find you nowhere outside; because I was mistaken to search for you outside, you are within.” God is therefore “hidden in the soul where the good contemplative must find him.” [*God is hidden in the soul; it is there that we must look for him.*] (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 1)

27. In this spiritual slumber that the soul has in the bosom of its Beloved, it takes hold of and tastes all repose, quietude and tranquility of the peaceable night, and receives an unfathomable and obscure divine intelligence jointly together in God; that is why it says, that its friend is, for it, a peaceable night.

Similar to the gracious dawn.

The soul says, that this calm and tranquil night is not wholly somber and obscure night, but like the night when it nears the break of day: for this repose and this quietude in God is not to the soul, obscure like a gloomy night, but a repose and quietude in divine light, and a new knowledge of God, in which the spirit, most sweetly calm, is elevated to the divine light. –

In this repose, and silence of the afore-said night, and in this account of the divine light, the soul perceives an admirable harmony and arrangement of the Wisdom of God. – It calls music “quiet” or without sound; because as we have said, it is a calm and tranquil intelligence with no sound of the voice, and thus one rejoices in the soul from the

sweetness of the music, and from the quietude of the silence. And the soul says its Friend is this music without sound; because it is through him that it knows itself and tastes of this harmony of spiritual music. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 15)

28. The Devil during the time in which God gives the soul mediation and sweetness in faith, envies so much this peace of the soul, that he tries to fling horror and fright upon the spirit, in order to prevent this good, sometimes as if to inwardly threaten its spirit: and when he sees that he cannot reach the interior of the soul, because the soul is so strongly mediated and united with God, at least through the outside, he places distractions around the sensate sphere, to see if he will be able to pull the Wife from the quietude of its bed. –

These fears are called “Vigilant,” because of faith they keep vigil over the soul, waking it from its sweet inner slumber. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 30)

29. My soul is so alone, so alienated and detached from all things created, superiors and inferiors and entered so deeply with you in the mediation, that not one of these things reaches its point of view. –

Aminadab (Deceit) didn’t dare appear.

(See Deceit, Number 8) This Aminadab (Deceit) of The Holy Scriptures signifies the Devil, enemy of the soul, who combat the soul and troubles it with his unmentionable attire of temptations, that it may not enter into this fortress and hiding place of the mediation in union with the Friend, in which place the soul is so favored, victorious and strong in virtues, that the Devil dares not appear before it: from where the favor of the support of such an arm comes, and the Devil being so put in flight, in both even the soul which has arrived in this state having so well vanquished him, he appears no more before the soul.

By a certain repeat of spirit, the sensory elements and the powers receive the recreation and the delectation, though which the powers are attracted to the mediation where the soul is already drinking of the spiritual blessings; which is rather to descend to their view, than to taste of them vitally. – The Soul use no other term than that of descend, to give us to understand, that these powers descend from their operations down to the mediation of the soul, “in which Jesus Christ Our Lord and most gentle Husband wants to put all those who invoke his name. So be it.” [*I make the same prayer to Our Lord. Rather to God that all those who combat these paths and decry them, may have had experience in them. Their zeal may change like that of St. Paul; that may become the preachers of the same things that they combat with so much ardor.*] (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 40)

30. If the soul wants to operate then on its own, behaving in another manner than one of loving attention, very passively and tranquilly, with discoursing as before; it will prevent the blessings that God imparts to it in the loving account, which are imparted to it at the beginning in the exercise of purgation, and since then in a bigger expression of love: (as I say, and it is thus) if one receives this expression passively and in the manner of God, not in the way of the soul, He flees only to receive it, the soul must be strongly disencumbered of peaceable pleasures and calm in the manner of God: as the air, so much the more it is clean, pure and quiet, so much the better it is enlightened and warmed by the Sun. Consequently the soul must be attached to nothing, neither to an affair of mediation, nor to any fancy, either sensitive or spiritual; because it requires a spirit so free and so empty, that whatever the soul would like to do, be it discussing or thinking of something in particular, or following some fancy, this would hinder and worry it, and make noise in the profound silence that the soul must have as much in the senses as in the spirit, in order that it pray, hear this profound and delicate word of God, that he speaks to the heart in this solitude, (as He says through Hosea 2:14) and so that it listens in extreme peace and tranquility (as David says Psalms 84:9 Douay or 85:8 KJV) to what the Lord says, because He speaks this peace in the soul.

“When it happens that the Soul feels itself silenced with its ears pricked up, the loving attention, of which I have spoken, must again be most simple without care nor any reflection, of the sort that the soul almost forgets this, to be completely occupied with listening so that it lives thus free for the time when it will be wanted.” (Reflection, Number 3 & *Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 6)

31. This manner of calm, clearness of mind, always comes with some inner absorption: consequently when the soul began to enter into this simple and tranquil state of contemplation, in no time nor season, must it want to employ itself in meditations, nor to rely on any essences, fancies or spiritual favors. –

Try to extirpate from the soul all longing for essences, flavors and meditation and do not worry it with any cares nor solitudes (that which causes concerns or anxiety) for things on high, and still less for things on love, putting it in all the alienation and solitude possible: For the more that it obtains this and rather attains this calm and tranquility; with so much more abandon the spirit of the divine wisdom, loving, tranquil, solitary, peaceable, sweet, ravisher of the spirit, feeling sometimes ravished and gently grieved without knowing by whom, nor from where, nor how, because this spirit has been imparted to it without the appropriate operation in the sense that it has been communicated, is shed upon the soul.

And a fragment of what God performs in the soul while in this Saintly leisure and solitude, is an invaluable blessing and more than the soul could have imagined from He who governs it; and one can not see how much the will

enlighten when He comes. At least what one will then be able to obtain from feeling is an alienation and a certain abstraction from all matters; sometimes more sometimes less, with a gentle breath of love and life of the spirit, with an inclination for solitude, and a weariness of the creatures and of the century: for when one finds an inclination for the spirit, all that is of the flesh is disgusting. But the inner blessings that this quiet contemplation leaves imprinted on the soul, without the soul feeling it, are inestimable. (See Proper Operations, Number 20 & (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 7)

32. How much God values this tranquility, or this slumber, or rejection of the senses, one can well see in this remarkable and so effective incantation that He makes in the Canticle, saying: "I entreat you, O daughters of Jerusalem by the stags and the rams of the country side, to not wake my Beloved until she wants to be." [Songs of Solomon 2:7] By which He gives to understand, how much He loves to see us fall asleep and watch our thoughts drift away, since he interposes these solitary and secluded animations. But these spiritual Masters do not want the soul to rest and dwell in the calm, but instead that it works and operates always in such a way that it gives no place for the divine operation; and they make it so that what God has operated on, destroys and effaces itself by the operation of the soul. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 11)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARY  
gives an account

33. St. Augustine (speaking of the highest Contemplation): There one sees the clear truth with no bodily substance, it is objurgated (rebuked or chide) by no clouds of false opinion; there the faculties of the soul are not oppressed nor painstaking; -- all the virtue (and the only virtue), is to love that which you see. (Book 12 on the Genesis, Chapter 12) Then the spiritual will have begun to "judge all things, and he to be judged by no one, although in this life he is still watching as if through a mirror." [I Corinthians 2:15] (Treatise 102 on St. John & *Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 11, Canticle 3, Section 3)

34. If the turmoil of the flesh no longer made any noise in the soul, if the phantoms and species of the earth, the water, of the air and of the Heavens even left it in repose, telling it nothing anymore; if the soul were then silent even within itself, if it passed beyond faith without a thought of faith, and that in this state, the truth itself spoke to the soul, not by those sorts of dreams or revelations which take place in the imagination, nor by any extraordinary voices, nor by any other of these signs, through which it has sometimes pleased God to make himself heard, nor by the voice of any man, nor even by the voice of an Angel, nor by the sound of thunder, nor by the enigmas of figures and parables; because all these things say, to those who have the ears to hear: We did not make ourselves, and we are only the product of he who exists eternally. Supposing that none of these things has spoken to this soul, or that they have told it only this single work, and after that they have fallen silent to give the soul means to bring all its attention to he who made them, and that we love in them, and that the soul has heard Himself, as we did at this moment, where being raised above ourselves, we have achieved that supreme Wisdom, which is above everything, and which exists eternally; that which has only passed through like a flash for our consideration, has been continued for the consideration of this soul of which we are speaking; and that without being divided by any other vision, this soul has been engulfed and absorbed completely in the wholly interior and wholly celestial joy, and has found itself fixed forever in the state where we saw ourselves in that moment of pure intelligence, which made us heave a sigh of love and of pain for not being able to remain: would not this be that joy of the Lord, which is spoken of in the Gospels? (*Confessions*, Book 9, Chapter 10)

35. Hugues of St. Victor: See Prayer, Section 3, Number 14.

36. Le P. Bartelemi des Martyrs, Track: Proper Operations, Number 24.

37. St. Bernard (or rather the Abbott William): Here is the end, it is the consummation, the perfection, the peace, the divine joy, it is the joy of the Holy Spirit, it is the silence in the heavens: for while we are of this life, love is sometimes possessed of the silence of this very happy peace in heaven, that is to say in the soul of the just, which is the seat of Wisdom; but it is a half-hour or almost this much time; and for what remains of thoughts, intention makes of them an everlasting feast to the Lord. (*On Love and Contemplation of God*, Chapter 4, Section 8)

38. Richard (explaining these words of Psalms 23:3 Douay or 24:4 KJV): "Who will ascend the mountain of the Lord, or who will remain in his holy place?" It is a rare thing to climb this mountain, but much more rare to remain there at the summit and to stop there, but very rare to live there and to come to rest on the mountain. (*Preparation to the Contemplation*, Chapter 76)

39. D. Bartelemi des Martyrs: See Operations of God, Number 10.

40. Suarez: The thought of God himself unites better with his love, that the thought of or the knowledge of his love: for that is the thought of a created thing, which does not lead by itself to such a love; and it even happens that when the soul is brought toward God by love, if it is occupied with faith and its own acts, is if reflecting on these acts, thinking of what it does, it is distracted and cooled in the love of God. (*On the Prayer*, Chapter 4) In the same place, Chapter 4, Section 2.

41. Blossius: Here because of the understanding, being made unconsciously, the soul comes to rest in God alone; naked, simple and unknown; for the divine light is incessantly because of its over-whelming clarity, from where it comes that the soul is called obscurity. (*Spiritual Institution*, Chapter 12, section 3)

42. Father Louis du Pont.: This repose seems to be the slumber, which in the Cantic God commands the souls to keep. "I entreat you, O daughters of Jerusalem, to not awaken nor have awakened my Beloved, until she wants to be." [Songs of Solomon 2:7] The Husband responds, this voice is of my Beloved, this morsel so gentle and with sureness, can only come from her hand. (*Life of Alvarex*, Chapter 12) In the same place, section 7.

43. Which explanation, (adds Father Nicholas of Jesus-Maria) St. Bernard had given beforehand, as well as St. Anselme, Rupert, and St. Thomas, who have all by the way been servants of the word of slumber. – It is written in the Scriptures, "God cast a deep sleep on Adam" [Genesis 2:21]; in which place others read as: "God cast on ecstasy on Adam"; understanding this somnolence or deep sleep to be some sublime contemplation: for it is thus interpreted by St. Ambrose, St. Gregory, St. John Chrysostome, St. Isido and other Commentators with whom they accord themselves touching the manner of speaking of the blessed Thomas of Villeneuve, (on the Cantic) and Suarez in (Book 2 on the Prayer and In the same place, many citations)

The same Father again gives an account of

44. Richard of St. Victor: To be spirited in the spirit is to enter into oneself, and to collect ones thoughts all inside of oneself; and meanwhile to ignore entirely what happens with the flesh and around the flesh. (In the same place, Chapter 12, Section 2)

Father James of Jesus

45. St. Dennis calls "this contemplation the very clear skies of silence which teach secretly, and fill blind understanding: All there rings in the night, silence, darkness, not seeing, not operating, abandon of the powers, and like a reduction of the soul to its essence, which remaining vanquished and thus mediated, and in mystical essential in itself, delivers itself wholly in loving and affective union unto God, who assists intimately, truly and presently according to this divine essence in the essence this kindly soul, not only by virtue of immensity but by virtue of friendship." (*Mystical Theology*, Chapter 1 & (*Notes on John of the Cross*, Disciple 1, Part 4, Section 3)

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

46. I am not speaking here of the mediation, through which those who want to pray, place themselves in the presence of God, returning into themselves and retiring, by way of saying, their soul in their heart, in order to speak to God. For this mediation is made by the commandment of love, which rousing us to prayer, makes us take this means of doing it well; so that we lead ourselves to this retirement of our spirit. But the mediation of which I hear spoken, is not made by the commandment of love, but by love itself; that is to say that we do not elect to do it ourselves, as much as it is not in our power to have it when we want, and it doesn't depend on our care; but God makes it in us by His most saintly grace. He who, says the blessed Mother Teresa of Jesus, has left in writings, that the prayer of mediation is like when a hedgehog, or a turtle, retires inside in itself, understood this well; except that these beasts may retire inside of themselves when they want: but mediation does not live in our will, it summons us when it pleases God to make us this grace.

So it is made thus. Nothing is so natural to the good as to unite and attract to itself the things which can feel the good, as do our souls, which always incline and yield to their treasure, that is to say, to what they love: It therefore happens sometimes. (See Presence of God, Number 20 & *On Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 7)

47. And so it happens to several saints and faithful devotees, that having received the divine Sacrament, contains all celestial benediction, their soul closes itself up, and all their capacities collect themselves together, not only to worship this sovereign King newly present after an admirable presence in their work; but for the unbelievable consolation and spiritual refreshing, that they receive to feel by faith the divine seed of the immortality within them. Where you will notice, that all these mediations is made by Love, which feeling the presence of the Beloved by the charms that he spreads in the bottom of the heart brings back and gather all the soul to him, by a most kind inclination, by a most gentle shaping, and by a delightful folding of all the faculties from the side of the Beloved, who attracts them to Himself by the strength of his sweetness, with which he binds and draws the hearts as one draws the bodies by cords and material bonds.



But this gentle mediations of our soul in itself, is not only by feeling the divine presence in the middle of our heart; but in no matter what manner it be, that put ourselves in this sacred presence, it happens sometimes that all our inner powers close up and gather themselves together, by the extreme reverence and gentle fear which seizes us, in consideration of the sovereign Majesty of the one who is present to us. (In the same place)

48. The soul consequently to which Our Lord gives the saintly loving quietude in the prayer, must abstain, as much as it can, from looking within, nor must its repose, in order to be kept, be looked at inquisitively; for he who is too fond of it loses it. – And like the infant who in order to see where its feet are removed its head from this mother bosom, and comes back incontinent because he is so sweet: thus, it is necessary that if we find ourselves distracted by the curiosity of knowing what we are doing at the prayer, that suddenly we put our hearts back in the gentle and peaceable attention of the presence of God, from which we had been diverted. Nevertheless, don't believe that there is any danger of losing this sacred quietude by certain actions of the body or the spirit, which are not made either lightly or by indiscretion: for as the blessed Mother Teresa says, "It is a superstition to be so careful of this repose as to not want to cough, nor spit nor breath for fear of losing it; as much as God who gives this peace, does not remove it for such movements which are necessary, nor for the distractions and divagations of the spirit when they are involuntary:" [Distraction, Number 18] & the will being once enticed into the divine presence," [Will of God, Number 33] "does not allow the sweet things to be savored, although understanding and memory have dispersed and escaped." [*This is the feeling of St. Teresa. See above number 18 and Will of God, numbers 17-18*] It is true that at the time, quietude of the Soul is not so large, as if understanding and memory were conspiring with the will: but quietude does not always allow itself to be a true tranquility, since it reigns over the will which is "the mistress of all the other faculties – but nevertheless, the peace of the soul would certainly be greater and gentler, if one made no sound around it, and had no subject which moved it, neither one of the heart, nor of the body, for it would surely like to be wholly filled up with the sweetness of this divine presence; but not being sometimes able to prevent itself from being diverted to the other faculties, it at least conserves quietude in the will, which is the faculty through which it receives the enjoyment of the food." [*I wrote somewhere, that as the will is sovereign over all the powers it attracts the others after it. (See the article, Presence of God note on the Explication of the Canticle 3, Verses 1-2, page 156)*] And note that at the time, the will retained in quietude, by the pleasure that it takes in the divine presence, does not move in order to bring back the other powers which are lost, as much as if it wanted to undertake this venture, it would love its repose, not fancying itself for its dearly Beloved, and would lose its sorrow from running here and there in order to catch these flighty powers; which can not be as usefully called to their duty as by the perseverance of the will in saintly quietude: for little by little all the faculties are attracted by the pleasure that the will receives, and from which it makes them feel some resentment, like a perfume, which urges them to come near, to participate in the blessing which it is rejoicing. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 10)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

49. He who won't love you, my Love and my life, will never have either peace or repose in faith: for there is no peace nor repose but in you; and outside of you all is only vanity and affliction of spirit on the earth. One cannot say that the repose of the wicked, if they have any, is a true repose: their repose is only beastly and still more so than that of beasts. – But the unhappy man has repose down here only for the moment, always finding someone who opposes his appetite: and thus poor and miserable as he is, he goes on wasting his sad life in search of a faint and simulated repose, that your lovers consider worse than hell. (Contemplation 4)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

50. The prayer of savory mystic repose is a pleasant and agreeable tranquility, or repose of spirit, with an inner joy, which is accompanied by an inclination and movement to the good. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 6, Section 1)

51. This prayer, says St. Bonaventure, "is an admirable and sweet tranquility, proceeding in the soul from an innate sweetness, which is accorded to it because of its frequent prayers." (On the Seven Degrees of Contemplation) The experience of this repose is not given but to those who are great spiritual. –

Harphius says, "Picture this same repose with different colors." So, he says, "the celestial Father emits from his face a certain brilliant and simple light in the highest point of the simple and naked thought." (*Mystic Theology*, Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 1 & In the same place, Section 3)

The Mystic Day speaks of nothing other than that of the prayer of repose in Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapters 3-13, or the last; & all sustained by authorities.

#### Section 2 – SILENCE.

#### ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOME

1. Silence is the language of the Angels, the Eloquence Heaven and of a persuading God.

ST. TERESA

2. See Vocal Prayer, Number 12.

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

3. He says in the figure put in front of his works that the soul, which is on top of the mountain, is in a divine silence and in a perpetual banquet.

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

4. Taulere: Here certain interior and mute silence is developed, and it is not permitted to utter a word; nor even to work on anything, either within, or without: but the spirit suffers a certain gentle, in sensible, ineffable passion in the surprising miracle of the unfathomable, very clearly over shining Deity. (*Institutions*, Chapter 12 & (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 3)

ANTHONY OF ROYAS

5. There are three ways to silence oneself in the meditation. The first, when all the phantoms, all the inventions, and all the species of visible matters cease in the soul, in such a way that it is silenced for all that is created, and dwells asleep for all temporal matters; and that thus, silencing ourselves on the inside, as St. Gregory says, “we collect our thoughts inside of our soul, to contemplate our Creator, desiring nothing of this world; on the contrary endeavoring to chose from our heart all movement of illicit matters and even licit ones as much as one can,” as the Angelic Doctor teaches, permissible (licit) thoughts and so one rejoices in a great tranquility.

The second way to silence oneself in the meditation, is when the soul being put in silence has a type of spiritual idleness, resting together with Magdalene at the feet of Our Lord, saying these words: “I will do what the Lord says in me; and that God says to this soul.” [See also Psalms 84:9 Douay “I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me: for he will speak peace unto his people: And unto his saints: and unto them that are converted to the heart.” Or KJV “I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.”] “Listen, my daughter, - forget the house of your father; and the King will form a love for your beauty.” [See also Psalms 44:11-12 Douay “Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore.” Or KJV “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.”] So this second sort of silence is with good reason compared to a care: for he who listens, not only does he silence himself with respect to other things, but still he wants all to quiet themselves with respect to him, so that he is more perfectly converted to he who is speaking to him. – St. Gregory makes known this manner of teaching of which God makes use; saying, “That the words of God are without words, that he teaches he who is willing to enter his school to be his disciple, without syllables, without sound and without voice.” (Book 28 of the *Morals*, Chapter 2)

The third silence of understanding is made in God, when the soul is wholly transformed in him, and that the will savors the sweetness of God, and falls asleep in him like in the wine cellar, and is silenced, desiring nothing more; [Note: desiring nothing more; because it is satisfied, its desires are sated and filled.] since it finds itself satisfied: on the contrary it sleeps inside itself, forgetting the weakness of its condition, because it sees itself deified. –

In this third sort of silence it happens that the understanding is so coiled and so occupied within itself, that it hears nothing of what one tells it, like one reports about an Elderly Saint who was practicing in this silence for forty years. (*Life of the Spirit*, Part 1, Chapter 18)

6. All sort of knowledge, says St. Gregory, “being disproportioned to know God, one must close one’s eyes if one wants to contemplate him perfectly: in the way of this good elderly Woman, who entering into the Church said to God with much devotion: Lord, that what I wish for you may happen and that what you wish for me may happen, and immediately with the faith of what she was with God, and abandoning herself to his hands, she fell inwardly and outwardly silent, dwelling in this negative knowledge of which have spoken.” [Homely 13 on Ezekiel] [In the same place. In the opinions after Chapter 20]

7. St. Augustine said to God: “O my most gentle Lord, let us make accord, to know that I will die in myself, on the condition that you will live in me, inside and outside me. I will keep the silence, but on the condition that you will speak in me; and that being seated in the seat of my heart, you will teach like he who is the universal Master of me and of all the world. I will dwell firm and immobile like a post, without stirring either a foot, or a hand, contenting myself with the truth of faith and resignation between your hands. With this the Saint stayed like a dead person with regard to the sensitive matters, and to all the things created with a great silence and much quietude. (In the same place. Part 2, Chapter 20)

The same author gives an account of

8. St. Bernard: The continual silence and the detachment or the abstraction of all which is not God (as much as the state of the obligation of each person permits it,) disposes the souls of the union with God, and obliges his divine Majesty to favor us with the contemplation. (*On the Canticle & Life of the Spirit*, Part 1, Chapter 1)

9. St. Thomas: Two things are necessary, the first is to collect the soul inside of itself, retiring it from the diversity of exterior matters: and the second is that it leaves speech of reason. (U2Qu80A6 & In the same place, Chapter 19)

#### MONSIGNOR OLIER

10. The Prophet says that the great, the beauty, and the saintliness of Jesus Christ must be honored by silence. In effect there is no word, which is not unworthy of him. All expression and praises are below what he is. It is unutterable, and one cannot be worthy of him in his presence. Saint Magdalene is not accused of idleness for uttering no words in the presence of Jesus. She watches him, she hears him, she is full of him, and can want nothing but him. She is content with everything, and nothing can enter in her but his all Beloved. This soul received without saying anything. She was occupied without speaking. She was universally inclined toward him with her whole self. His love was alive, although he was shut up inside her, she was known very well by her Husband who was operating in the bottom of her soul.

Be then in peace in your silence, when the Beloved by his presence will reduce you to this state, and oblige you to quiet yourself to oblige you to see him, to consider him, to hear him and to bring in peace his operations. He is never present to the soul without enlivening it, and without performing in it some imperceptible replacement. (Letter 123)

#### FATHER EPIPHANE LOUIS

gives an account of

11. St. Augustine: See Abandon, Number 34.

## SECTION 52 SATIETY

### SHORT METHOD

As all are called to beatitude, all are called to enjoy in God, and in this life, and in the other; since the enjoyment of God makes our beatitude.

I say of God himself, and not of his gifts, which couldn't make the essential beatitude, not being able to fully content the soul. For it is so noble and so big, that all the most exalted gifts of God could not make it happy, if God did not give himself to it.

It will be said that one feigns being there. I say that this cannot be feigned; since he who is dying of hunger cannot feign, especially for a long time, being in a perfect satiety. Some desire or longing will always escape from him, and he will make it known that he is very far from his end goal. (Chapter 24, Numbers 12-13)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. See Consistence, Number 1.

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

2. See Non-Desire, Number 6.
3. O poor tongue, which finds no words! O poor understanding you are vanquished! O I will, how you are in repose! You want nothing else, because you are drowned in your satiety. (*Life*, Chapter 21)
4. See Loss, Number 19.

#### ST. TERESA

5. The soul is so content to be seen near the fountain, that even without drinking, it is wholly satiated it seems to the soul that there is nothing to desire. (*Way of Perfection*, Chapter 31)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

6. See Quietude, Section 2, Number 3.
7. One must know that the soul sees itself so much besieged with the torrent of the spirit of God, and be mastered by him with so much force, that it seems to it to be flooded by all the rivers of the world, which besiege and drown all its actions and passions in which it was before. And though this happens with so much force, it is without turmoil, because these rivers are rivers of peace; as the Husband says through Isaiah: "I will bring upon her as it were a river of peace and as a torrent over flowing the glory; and thus he fills it wholly with peace and with glory." [Isaiah 66:12]  
The second characteristic that the soul senses, is that this divine water fills the voids of it humility, and fills the hollows of it appetites, according to what Saint Luke says: "~~He~~ has filled the hungry with good things." [Luke 1:53] (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 14)
8. For in scattering his scents, which are sometimes in such great abundance, that it seems to the soul that it is dressed in delights, and bathed in an inestimable glory; such that it feels this not only within, but he still is in the habit of gushing out so much on the exterior, that they who are attending closely, recognize it well, and it seems to them like a garden full of delights and riches of God: and not only did one perceive this when the flowers are open, in these holy souls, but ordinarily they carry in themselves; I do not know what great and dignity, which causes respect and restraint among the others, by the super-natural effect which spreads into the subject, arising from the next and familiar communication with God, as it is said of Moses. [*Admirable and true according to the experience.*] (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 27)
9. All the end and all the desire of the soul and of God in all his works is the consummation of this state, and never does the soul rest until it arrives at this; because in this state there are a very much larger abundance and repletion of God, a securer and more stable peace, a more perfect sweetness without comparison but to an engagement. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 28)

10. Though it is true that this communication of the light and fire of these lamps of God; this fire is so sweet, that although it is an immense flame, it is the waters of life which sate and quench the thirst. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verse 1)

11. This grand feeling usually arrives toward the end of the illumination and purification of the soul, before it reaches the perfect union, where the powers are satiated and satisfy for the time being. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verse 3, Section 1)

#### FATHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

12. There the void is completely full, by and without differing from the full. There the void on indigent, (which is not however neither void nor indigent,) is over filled with the full, with the more full, with the most full, indeed with the same plenitude, beyond plenitude. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 8)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

13. The loving union, Gerson says, “of which Mystic Theology consists, coils the soul, sate its hunger and doses it in. For as each thing is held in repose, when it has acquired its perfection, and that our spirit through love is conjoined to the well perfecting Sovereign, it must next by necessity find there its repose, its satiety and its security.” (*Mystic Theology Cons. 42* & Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 10, Section 4)

14. This operation, says Harphius, “is accomplished in the savory spiritual scroll of the spiritual delights, of which the sweetness being tasted, at the same time the heart and all the sensate powers are flooded with a torrent of divine spiritual scroll, such that the soul, loving to be embraced by the divine Husband, and overflowing with celestial pleasure, and as if imbued with a spiritual intoxication, can contain neither the force nor the abundance of it without bursting without.” (*Mystic Theology*, Book 2, Chapter 41 & Book 3, Treatise 6, Chapter 8, Section 3)

## SECTION 53 REFLECTIONS

I believe I have shown enough, the importance of not reflecting on oneself (in the Articles: Surrender, Death, Loss, Propriety, Purification); that is why I will say very little.

### SHORT METHOD

The soul does not notice its act, because it is direct and not reflective. (Chapter 22, Number 6)

### CANTICLE

This Mistress has not made her look become so purified, that being always direct and without reflection, she doesn't know her look. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

Genuine love has no eyes for looking at itself. (Chapter 5, Verse 8)

If this Wife had thought of herself, she would have said: "Do not call me beautiful;" [Ruth 1:20] she would have made use of some word of humility: but she is incapable of all that: she has but a single concern, which is the search for her Beloved. She can speak only of him: she can think only of him: and when she might see herself thrown down the chasm, she would make no reflection upon it. (Chapter 5, Verse 8)

### AUTHORITIES

It would be necessary to write all of St. John of the Cross, to tell all the places where he shows the damage of reflections; and there is so much relation to proper operations that I will not repeat what has been said in this Article.

1. Henry Suso: See Annihilation, Number 5.
2. Rusbroche: Speaking of the Visionaries, he says between several other things; that these are people filled with a certain inclination disordered by natural love, which is always reflective on itself. [*Pride (self-love) always reflects on itself; and pure love looks only at God without turning to itself.*] (Proper Operation, Number 23)
3. The Blessed John of the Cross: See Quietude, Section 1, Number 30.
4. Father Nicholas of Jesus-Maria gives an account of - Father Thomas of Jesus: In this union of the soul with God, - the force of the soul so much absorbed and pulled back from its other operation, that it can in no manner reflect upon itself, or upon the acts of its powers. (*On Contemplation*, Book 5, Chapter 13 & *Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 4, Section 2)

### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

5. There are active, fertile spirits abounding in considerations; there are some which are supple, coiling and which love greatly to feel what they do, which want to see everything and examine in detail what happens inside of them, turning perpetually the view on themselves to recognize their progress. – All these spirits are usually subject to being troubled in the holy prayer. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 10)
6. See Abandon, Number 22.

### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

7. See Free Will, Number 5.
8. Love excessively reflective upon itself, returns only too often and easily to its imaginary subject, so well that it dwells taking in the effort of its imagination, though more or less spiritualized: and living through it more than through naked, blind faith, it believes the imagination and follows it to the large detriment of God, and to its own damage. (Diverse lights belonging to the contemplative life, Number 17)

## SECTION 54 RENOUNCEMENT

### SHORT METHOD

This is why it is so necessary to renounce oneself, and one's own operation, in order to follow Jesus Christ: for we cannot follow Jesus Christ if we are not animated by his Spirit. Now then so that the Spirit of Jesus Christ comes in us, ours must cede him the place. (Chapter 21, Number 7)

### CANITCLE

The Directors that Jesus Christ veritably made his companions, associating themselves for the government of the souls, (prior to Jesus' death) being not dead to themselves, nor crucified for the world with Jesus Christ, do not teach their followers to renounce themselves and crucify and die in all things, in order to live in God alone, and to that Jesus Christ may live in them. Through which it comes about that some people and other people being in a very natural and immortalized life, their conduct is so very human. (Chapter 1, Verse 6)

How (does one come out of oneself?) through the renouncement and through the fidelity to be continuing in all things, without permitting oneself any natural satisfaction, and without living through self nor through anything created.

— This exit from self through the continual renouncement of all self-interest is interior exercise, that the celestial Lover advises the souls which sign after the kiss on the mouth. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. When I see myself dismissed from grace and abandoned to my poverty, there is left for me no better remedy than patience, and the whole renouncement of myself, in order to want nothing but what God wants. (Book 2, Chapter 9, Section 6)
2. Quit all things and you will find all things; renounce all vain desires and you will find true repose. (Book 3, Chapter 32, Section 1)
3. See Propriety, Numbers 4-5.
4. The Blessed John of the Cross: See Exit from Self, Number 10.
5. The Blessed John of the Cross: They who are inclined to these tastes have another large imperfection, that is to say that they are very cowardly to walk by the hard way of the Cross as much as the soul which loves flavor naturally has some distaste for self-sacrifice. They have several other imperfections which are born in them from there and that Our Lord cures with time by temptation, distastes, bareness and suffering, which are part of the obscure night. Sobriety and spiritual temperance has a very different temper and propriety, seeing that it inclines the soul in everything to mortification, fear and subjection; showing that the value and perfection of things does not consist of the multitude, but in knowing how to renounce oneself, which they must try to do as much as it is in them, until God wants to entirely purify them by putting them in the obscure night. (*Obscure Night*, Book 1, Chapter 6)
6. Father Nicholas of Jesus Maria gives an account of - D. Bartelemy of the Martyrs: See Propriety, Number 24.

### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

7. Renounced love, or the renunciation and Evangelic abnegation, is a whole surrender of all self to God in all things, without any exception either of work or of time: by virtue of which surrender the creature does not act, does not suffer, does not want, does not command, and accepts nothing for itself, nor for its own contentment, but for the single pleasure of infinite God. — As many times as he is presented opportunities for true loss and surrender of all oneself to God, for his infinite love, the truly loving soul always does it without exception.

In effect the man who wants to live in God, and love him as he should, must be necessity lead a renounced life; and God desires this from all of us, because this sort of life is a necessary disposition for his love, and because it is more conformable to ourselves, although more troublesome to the sense and to nature. Then that which makes such a life so difficult to grapple with, and even so unknown is that man is almost never only in the senses. If he climbs higher than the senses, he wants to conceive of divine matters only by way of understanding, and believes that all saintliness must consist of high elevation and of the luster of his illuminated understanding of God in order to know him and enjoy (appreciate) him. From there it comes that man wants none of this renounced life. (See Proper Operations, Number 27 & *Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 11)

8. It is still necessary to know, that the subjects of renunciation are but little things, while one has inclination accord to God, to proceed or not, to some act of mortification; although this may always be of large merit, if one proceeds there by the love motive of pure love. But the true life renounced in total conformity and uniformity, is when God, or men, or the one and the other together, demand from us that we go and live in a way completely contrary to ourselves, without consideration neither of time, or place nor of people. –

As for the subtraction of momentary satisfactions that we remove from our senses, this is better called mortification than renunciation. For renunciation concerns things which are lasting, and which are difficult and opposed to ourselves, that it seems that we have no liberty to deliver ourselves from, or to do other than that which is presented to suffer, though we are most free, even to want this in our amorous desire, and in our loving sufferance. That if the crosses as much of the spirit as of the body are so painful, heavy, and troublesome, and of so long lasting to us that this passes beyond that I have just said, then we pass from the state of renunciation to that of resignation. (See Proper Operations, Number 27 & *Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 11)

9. This renounced life is so supernatural, that it is above all the miracles that the Saints have performed and perform in God; therefore one finds very few men who practice it faithfully. For there is much to suffer, indeed sometimes it seems to be everything which one should not however believe: but it seems that it is thus, because of the great nakedness, destitution and weakness with which one is burdened, with a total ignorance of self and of God, and a whole effusion of one's inferior powers: which leads one to not know if one is dead or alive; if one is losing, or if one is winning, if one is consenting, or one is resisting. It is there that the soul agonizing, rendering life into God, dies and breaths out more pain and anguish than love, it seems to it; but it is a loving pain and anguish that it suffers in the divine arms, dwelling there forever entirely submissive, renounced and resigned to all which is of his delight. Now then this perfection is totally accomplished and achieved when one has become simple and strong in passive practice, either to contemplate God eternally in a very simple and one adhesion, or to adhere to him simply and uniquely in the least state and constitution: or even to be totally lost and submerged in this infinitely large, vast and deep sea, in which one is totally refused, simple and eternal like itself above all distinction. (See Proper Operations, Number 27 & *Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 11)

10. See Proper Operations, Number 29.

11. But as it is not so much a question of this active love, as of the passive, truly and entirely renounced forever, as much as to feel as to not feel the blessings and gifts of God, and other similar things, this last state is much more presentable; because we can give more satisfaction to God than in the preceding state. This is to what we much resolve ourselves, leaving nothing to do or to endure which may be in our power, in order to bring it into effect according to the enjoyment of God our Love.

Now then it is a profound secret, that love boldly practiced in oneself, by all individuals, in all his purpose which is God; and infinitely different in state and in constitution, than acting and living only according to the will of God. When you are lost entirely in the vast infinity of the total ocean of the same love, you will see if I speak true and why; I have well wanted to tell you it, in order that you leave the least noble for the most noble; and what is less, and even a lot to have everything. (*Mirror and Flames of Love*, Chapter 3)

12. See Surrender, Number 32.

This commandment of Jesus Christ; “Deny yourself,” [Matthew 16:24] is more than sufficient to justify this proposition.



SECTION 55  
RESURRECTION. NEW LIFE

CANTICLE

For this soul, death has passed by all exterior things; in such a way that there is nothing, more which can satisfy it. If something appears there again, it is a renewal of innocence. (Chapter 2, Verse 11)

Until, says the Husband, the day of the new life, that you must receive in my Father, begins to appear, and that the shadows which hold you in the darkness of the most naked, blind faith, fall away and dissipate, I will go to the mountain of the myrrh. (Chapter 4, Verse 6)

The Wife invites the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of life to come blow into her in order that this garden so filled with flowers and fruits, scatters its scent for the use of general souls.

It is also the Husband who asks that the resurrection of this Wife be made soon, and that she take on a new life by the breath of this invigorating Spirit, who is he who must reanimate and revive this humble soul, so that the marriage may be perfectly consummated. (Chapter 4, Verse 16)

The Husband does not want either that his Beloved be awoken until she makes herself by the effect of the voice all powerful of God, which calls her from the tomb of death to the spiritual resurrection. (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

It remains for them a wicked quality opposed to God, until God, by long, strong and frequent operations, has removed this wicked quality, pulling the soul out of itself, removing from it all its infection, re-giving to it a blessing of innocence and losing it in him: this is what he calls resuscitating her innocent of the same place where her mother, who is human nature, was corrupted. (Chapter 8, Verse 5)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. To have the divine being, one must divinely be reborn. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy*, Chapter 2)
2. The Good therefore which is above all light, is called spiritual light, like being on original and frontal ray, an effusion of light, which overflows everywhere, and which from its plenitude enlightens all spirit, either above the world, or around the world, or also in the world; which renews all their powers and intellectual faculties, which embraces them and contains them all. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 4)

ST. AUGUSTINE

3. See Consistency, Number 5.

ST. JOHN CLIMAQUE

4. Others say, that this tranquility is a resurrection of the soul, which precedes that of the body. (*Holy Ladder*, Disciple 29, Article 4)

HENRY SUSO

5. Man, in order to progress and to be spiritually resuscitated and regenerated in God, must be dead to the disorder nature always reflects on itself. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 10)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

6. God thus makes the soul feeble in all that is not God, in order to dress it again, being already bare and stripped of its old skin. So its youth is renewed like that of the eagle, remaining clothed in the new-man, which (as the Apostle says), "is created according to God." [Ephesians 4:24] This is nothing other than illuminating the understanding with a supernatural light, such that human understanding is made divine being united with the divine. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 13)
7. See Complete Death, Number 9.
8. See Complete Death, Number 10.

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

9. Our Mystic Doctor says (*Living Flame of Love*, Cantic 1, Verse 6) that to the perfect souls, in this state all becomes love and praise, already having no more leaven which corrupts the dough; which way of speaking is most genuine and taken from St. Paul, who says: "Purify yourselves of

the old leaven so that you may be a completely new dough.” [I Corinthians 5:7] (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 14, Section 3)

He also gives an account of

10. St. Bernard: See Purification, Number 51.

11. St. Ambrose: See Creation, Number 12.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

12. See Faults, Number 12.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

13. Now some of them practiced this so happily, that they are enjoying at present very abundantly, indeed fully of the eternal fruits of their loving labor, in full possession of which one could say they are blessed, as much as one can be in this life. Most certainly one can say nothing of this excellent perception, not even those who are enjoying this good, and although their writings express grand things, this nevertheless is nothing with respect to what is of it: all the possible demonstrations do nothing and express nothing: There is only silence and serenity in ineffable love. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 14)

14. Everything like this that the Sun diversely affects on the earth, in proportion to whether it is near or far, in order to make the earth fertile for the benefit of men; like this the divine Sun of justice does not fail to produce the effects of his love in men, in some sooner, in others later, and in different degrees, according to how he finds the earth of their heart diversely disposed to this by grace. The flavor and the experience that we have of this truth, is so delightful to us, that we cannot express it enough; and it is in this manner that we penetrate all the effects of the love, which he produces in the souls, only to enrich them more and more with his blessings, raising them in itself, and showing them his hearty and his lively splendor, in order to make them perfectly loving himself, whose view and eternal taste brings them all good.

By these frequent effect and these divine successes they are stripped of the old-man and clothed in the new, who is divine in them, and who makes them divine in him: and this happens according to the varied degrees of grace, and according to the profound light that they have received by the wonderful flow of divine sapience.

Those who find shelter outside in the active life and who want to stay there, will never reach the splendors, revelations and delights of the interior life. Moreover, he who is simple according to these truths does well to take care to refrain both outwardly and inwardly, which is to say a lot; valuing infinitely more his simple heart, to which he is totally reduced and transfused, than all which his heart itself can produce to occupy him and pull his outwards instead of inward. —

It is there that the soul delights in God himself in simplicity of spirit and of repose above comprehension. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 15)

## SECTION 56 SACRIFICE

### SHORT METHOD

Prayer must be an Oration and sacrifice.

It is necessary that the soul let itself be destroyed and annihilated by the force of Love. It is a state of sacrifice essential to Christian Religion; through this the soul lets itself be destroyed and annihilated, to render homage to the Sovereignty of God. (Chapter 20, Numbers 1 & 3)

### CANTICLE

A soul of this degree carries a heart of submission to all the will of God; such that it would want to refuse him nothing: but when God explains his particular plans, and using the rights that he has acquired over it, he asks it for the last self-denials and the most extreme sacrifices; ah, it is for when all the bowels are moved, and when it finds pain where it believed itself to have no more: and this pain comes from it being attached to something without knowing it. (Chapter 5, Verse 4)

The soul has no sooner recognized its fault, then it repeats of it, and is raised again by a renewal of renunciation and an extension of sacrifice. It is not always without sorrow and bitterness: the inferior part and all nature are seized by sadness and fright; this makes all its actions are made more arduous and bitter; but from the strongest bitterness it has again felt experienced sensation. (Chapter 5, Verse 5)

### AUTHORITIES

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. See Joy of the Soul, Number 5.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

2. See Union, Number 58.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

3. When the plague attacked the Diocese of St. Charles, he emulated himself in spirit to the delight of God, and in kissing tenderly this cross, he cried out from the bottom of his heart with St. Andrew; I salute you, O Precious Cross! I salute you, oh, blessed tribulation, oh, holy affliction that you are kind! (*On the Love of God*, Book 12, Chapter 9)

4. I add to the sacrifice of St. Charles that of the grand Patriarch Abraham, as a vivid image of the strongest love that one can imagine in such creatures. He sacrificed indeed all the strongest natural affection that he could have, when hearing the voice of God, which said to him, "Leave your country and your kindred and the house of your father and come to the country that I will show you; he left suddenly and set out promptly in route without knowing where he would go." [Genesis 12:1]

But all this is nothing in comparison to what he did after when God calling him two times, and having seen his promptness in responding, tells him; Take Isaac your only child, whom you love, and go into the land of vision, where you will offer him for holocaust (burnt offering) upon one of the mountains which I will show you. For there is this great man who leaves suddenly with his so beloved and pleasant son, takes three days for this journey, arrives at the foot of the mountain, leaves there his young men servants and his ass, instructs his son Isaac to bring the wood required for the holocaust (burnt offering), reserving the blade and fire for himself. While ascending the child says to him; My father, here is the wood and the fire; but where is the victim for the holocaust (burnt offering). To which he responded; My child God will provide himself the victim for the holocaust (burnt offering). [Genesis 22:1-10]

In binding up his son to immolate him, he had already sacrificed him in his heart. Ah! By grace then see what a holocaust (burnt offering) this holy man made in his heart. (*On the Love of God*, Book 12, Chapter 10)

5. See Free Will, Number 4.

#### MONSIGNOR OLIER

6. The evil spirit asked to sift you as wheat, Jesus Christ said to his disciples. [Luke 22:31] Through this he was exposing them to the great temptation that they suffered in his death, which was the time of the power of darkness, in which God had released the bridle to the spite of the demons. During all this time all the Disciples, except St. John, left the Son of God. But the Blessed Virgin remained unshakable in the faith of her Son and in the estimation of his grandeur. Stand with her collected in silence and in peace at the feet of the Cross of Jesus Christ. Stand intimately

united to the virtue and to the force of this divine Mother, who Holy Scripture notes for us has remained standing on Calvary, to express the force of her heart and her consistency in the tribulation of the cross, which was unexplainable. (Letter 153) [*Admirable disposition in the time of sacrifice.*]

7. Die then, I beg of you, in this interior and delicate part of yourself, and through this you will make a sacrifice, which will merit your spiritual resurrection, being all reclothed in God and in his life by the death of your whole self. That if you are thus dead to everything yourself, and living to God alone, your life which is now hidden in the bottom of yourself with Jesus Christ, will burst inside you and will spurt outside of yourself. This will be the fruit of your death and of the whole burial of yourself, and what you must hope for, after you have buried your old-man and all your own faculties in the spirit of God and in his own life. For this accustom yourself especially, as I said, to the death of the spirit, submitting it to the judgments and to the thoughts of the others. This will obtain for you facility for this death, that a thousand times I want to repeat to you, and without which you will never have in your divine life. For it is given to the soul only after it is dead to its own life, since it is through death to itself that it must resuscitate to the life of Jesus Christ. (Letter 169)

SECTION 57  
UNKNOWN AND EVEN PERSECUTED SAINTS

CANTICLE

The soul that wholly gives itself up to God suffers, among those that don't: for the others do as they can to remove them from its path. But in the same way that the lily preserves its purity and scent amid the thorns, without being damaged; so much are these souls preserved by their Husband amidst the clashes, that they must wipe away that part of those who like only to guide themselves, and to multiply in their own practices; have no docility to follow the movement of grace. (Chapter 2, Verse 2)

It is a strange thing how the creatures, even spirituals make haste to withdraw the soul from this gentle slumber. (Chapter 2, Verse 7) *[All the people who begin to serve God are as a rule persecuted by the people of the world; because the retreat of the ones is a public condemnation of the disorder of the others: but so much the more are they esteemed to be honorable people. It is not the same way for inward looking people; they are not only persecuted by the dissolute people of the world; not only by the honorable people, but much more by the devoted and spirituals who are not inward looking. These people do it by zeal, not knowing any other way than that which they practice. But they receive the last flagrant insults of the falsely devoted and the falsely spiritual, because as God enlightens them with his truth, they become aware of the disturbances, the malice and the hypocrisy they have created: and there is the same opposition between these people and the true spirituals, as there is between the Angels and the devils.]*

But also come away from the den of the lions and the highlands of the leopards: for it will only be through the most cruel persecutions of men and demons like so many ferocious beasts, that you will be able to arrive at such a divine state. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

As the rind is the least part of the pomegranate, so is he who encloses all his goodness in faith, so that what appears outwardly from the soul of this degree is very little, in comparison with what is hidden. The inside is full of the most pure charity, and the most reserved graces, covered however by a very common exterior: for God takes pleasure in hiding the souls that he wants for himself. – In this sort of way that those who would judge them according to appearances, would believe them to be the most common, although they are the delights of God.

They are not those who burst into the world either by miracles or extraordinary gifts. All that is too little for them. God reserves them for himself; and he is so extremely jealous *[Oh truly, my God, you are a jealous God! He is named this name in Exodus 34:14. The reason for the jealousy of God is very few souls that there are which give themselves to him without reserve: he would only know suffering from sharing; that is why he has very little or no taste at all for divided souls. But as for those which have given themselves to him wholly, he loves them and regards them as his own property: he makes use of all rights over them, without free will hindering him; because the donation is pure, whole and very free: but moreover he has for them a jealousy proportionate to the love that he brings to them; he can suffer no blemishes in them: they are like those rare pieces that one shuts up with care in a cabinet, and that one does not expose to the eyes of men.]* that he does not expose them to the eyes of men: he sets his seal upon them, as he says himself, that his Wife is [Songs of Solomon 4:12] the sealed fountain, of which he himself is the seal. But why does he keep it sealed? It's that [Songs of Solomon 8:6] love is strong like death, and jealousy hard like Hell. Oh that he may express well that which I am advancing. For as death removes all from he who it holds; so does love snatch all away from the soul, and hides the soul in the secret of a living sepulcher. The jealousy of God is hard like hell, in which there is nothing he won't do to fully possess his Wives. (Chapter 6, Verse 6)

The grape has this, which is particular to it, that although it is full of liquor, it is not for itself; but it gives what it has inside to he who squeezes it. This soul is of the same sort: the more it is squeezed and oppressed by persecution, the more it is communicative and is charitable to even those who treat it ill. (Chapter 7, Verse 7)

AUTHORITIES

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

1. See Operations of God, Number 6.
2. See Communication, Section 2, Number 4.
3. See in connection with this, how the Saints rejoiced amid abuses and persecutions, because they had something to offer to our Lord. (*Chem. de Perf.*, Chapter 36)
4. See Suffering, Number 2.

BROTHER JOHN OF SAMSON

5. See Operations of God, Number 17.

6. These holy men know nothing of the home of Saint, nor of Saintliness, in them nor for them; although they know very well what it is for the others believing that what is due to him is only perpetual confusion and ignominy for their sins. They know only what it is to love perfectly. Which is why they worry neither about how nor when to die, fearing divine Justice no more in death than in life; and it does not matter to them whether they die alone or in public, having confessed or not, although they do not neglect to turn to the Sacraments of the Church. They die assuredly, and with a renunciation of all self, and by this even they are unknown to men. That is why the devils have so little advantage over them at this point of death, and so they die more of love than of pain. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 2, Chapter 4, Number 5)

7. These souls, oh my Love, are as many small divinities on the earth, unknown to the indifferently spiritual, who are not melted, reduced and completely lost in your immensity like them. That is why, not being of the same spirit and of the same life, they are disgusted by them and often scorn them, until they have slandered and defamed them, even before the most holy. But all this only helps them to settle better and lose themselves irretrievably in you, on my Love, where these souls are entirely free and exempt from the reaches of the poisoned and serpentine tongues of these wretches. The last and highest term of the wisdom of these slanderers and falsely spiritual, consists only of themselves. They are tied up and driven by all things like unworthy slaves their most secret and hidden inner characteristics, which fill them up with themselves and their own subtle and diverse inventions, and which hold them thus miserably captive and serve to themselves. Perhaps in several among them this evil will continue until the point of death when their eyes will be opened.

But, my Love, what are these secret characteristics? They are the effects of proper love, and of the proud and very fine spiritual. It is from there that personal judgment, personal seeming good, personal complaisance, personal wisdom, personal pursuits on all occasions. All this has no source nor end but love of self: and these are vices covered in a cloak of saintliness and pretexts of pleasing you and loving you. However these people are before you only filth and overturned spirit, which pleases itself in its own unhappiness, but in a subtle and spiritual manner. They have a large estimation of their paths, of their works, of their merits, of their sentiments, in a word of themselves. And to cover themselves, they humble themselves through fake and hypocritical humiliations before those who they know to be far from believing them to be as such, and from whom on the contrary they wait for praise to be tickled and delighted with pleasure. (Contemplation, Number 3)

8. See Operations of God, Number 20.

9. These true sages are well distanced from the spirit of exaggeration and of all indignation, abhorring the extremes such as Hell. [*What he wants to say is that although they express the blessings of God, they don't exaggerate, in speaking simply about their experiences; neither do they have any indignation for their persecutors, knowing of what they are capable.*] So, they know well that nothing can happen to any sinner, as much according to the miseries of the spirit as of the body, which cannot happen by divine permission. It is true that to sinners that happens as chastisement, and to the just for their exercise and their luster, for proof of their love, and to make in this their purgatory in this life. That is why it is infinitely important, that these persons adhere to the secret judgments of God as they do, knowing well their infinite depth, and that they are redoubtable and adorable like himself in all that he allows to happen to men. (*On Simplicity*, Treatise 5, Number 25)

10. Thus it is the truth that God takes so great a pleasure in the supreme luster and holiness of his Saints, that in order to train certain ones, he permits often enough that all his Church suffer large losses and damage. Witness St. Bernard in the exercise, which was given to him concerning the preaching of the crusade; and King St. Louis, the exercise and the faithfulness, which cannot be seen without crying from compassion and surprise.

It could seem too low, sensitive and weak people that God should not act thus to the detriment of the whole Church, and for the good and the luster of a single soul. – But it is puerile sentiment and a very large weakness and ignorance; considering that God has as little to do with all that it is created as to that which does not exist.

And how will the clay say to the potter who makes use of it, why does he give it one form rather than another, and why does he destroy it based on his enjoyment? Who will be able to reproach God for what he neither does nor does not do? And who will impute wrong to him, if in a moment he wants to annihilate all creation? It is infinitely important to each Christian, and for a stronger reason to the faithful servants of his Majesty, to know that his sovereign reason is not conformable to the sense and judgment of men, which are diffused in the flesh and to the blood; and which such as they be, are only earth with respect to the view and to the sentiments that the Angels, most pure spirits, have of the reasons and of the disposition of God in himself.

It is a necessity to here shed ourselves of the old man, and by consequence to receive temporally the chastisement owed to divine Justice, in the corruption of our old man, because of which we are scattered and totally plunged within the rubbish of innumerable sins, which accompany our languorous life. That is why his Majesty, as much just as merciful, gives a very large blessing and an incomparable advantage to his creatures, when he chastise them, it seems in all severity here below, even taking away their lives, as a thing which belongs to him and with which he may do what

pleases him, and as it pleases him, with goodness, justice and equity. For in his order and eternal prescience, several would never be just nor saved, but by means of his most just chastisements; and the others would not be so excellently saved, nor with so much glory as they would be, in order to have give themselves in pray to life and to death, to his divine Majesty. –

It is necessary to even go as far as there, that without any consideration of our own interest, we desire that the enjoyment of God be eternally to each outcome; seeing that he is infinitely worthy. [*Some sentiments do not come from exquisite love.*] (*On Simplicity*, Treatise 5, Numbers 25-26)

11. These people are already so perfectly renewed and changed in their mortal flesh, fully subjugated to the spirit that they are so many excellent Deities on the earth, separated and hidden from the world, totally dead and crucified for the world, and for whom the world is crucified. They know the world very well, such as it is ill; and the world does not know them. What adventure is necessary for them to negotiate with it for the glory of God, it persecutes them and insults them cruelly by scandal mongering and slander, as if not able to bear them, because of their life totally contrary to its. (*On the Re-fusion of Man in God*, Treatise 2, Number 27)

12. See Operations of God, Number 23.

SECTION 58  
SCANDAL. ONE IS SCANDALIZED BY THIS STATE.

CANTICLE

One will raise as an objection to me, that this soul is not so hidden, since it helps its neighbor. But I answer, that this is what covers the soul most with baseness, God making use of this to render it more contemptible, because of the contradictions that it must endure. – For the ordinary, God allows the common exterior of these chosen souls, to scandalize (shock) even those who have a share in their blessings, until they part company often after God has drawn from them the effect that he was intending.

The Husband in this treats his Wife like himself. All those that he had won over to his Father hadn't they been scandalized by him? [Mark 14:27] Let one examine a little the life of Jesus Christ: nothing more common as to the exterior. They who do more extraordinary things are copies of the Saints, about whom Jesus Christ said that they would perform greater acts than him. [John 14:12] These souls are other Jesus Christs on the earth; this is why one notices less the traits of the Saints: *[I want to tell the traits of the Saints which have been most apparent: for it is certain that their saintliness.]* But for the characteristics of Jesus Christ, if one examines them closely, one will see them there very clearly. Still Jesus Christ is a subject of scandal to the Jews and seems to be a folly to the Gentiles. [I Corinthians 1:23] These people often shock in their simplicity those who attached to legal ceremonies, rather than to the simplicity of the Gospels, only look at the peel of the pomegranate without penetrating the inside. (Chapter 6, Verse 6)

AUTHORITIES

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

1. There are several people who are surprised and scandalized by it, because they don't know its cause: and if it weren't that God supports me, I would be considered by the world as a Lunatic. (In Her *Life*, Chapter 22)
2. Who sees these creatures, and doesn't understand what they are, admires them rather than learning about. No man must bring judgment of them if he doesn't want to be wrong. (*Dialogue*, Book 3, Chapter 10)

ST. TERESA

3. See Humility, Number 6.

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

4. One must live unknown among the best men, and be known to God alone, and by those who are truly humble, the number of which is very often so small, that hardly can one find one of them. – It is better to pass for indiscreet and imprudent, than to be justified there above; if it were not with respect to the largely weak spirits, but with regard to those who are largely wise in their own eyes, and for who that are curious and subtle examiners and scrutinizers of the spirits, one needn't do it. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 9)
5. See Humility, Number 16.
6. See Humility, Number 17.
7. Lets us say that those who are truly annihilated according to the last and supreme state, dwell from there, ignored and unknown, and that they are different from many holy enough people and excellent Mystics. – One does not see and one does not understand how that may be true in them, as much as one sees them most free to action, of which even the goodly and the holy are conscious. But one must know that the more one has become spirit and divine, by dint (process of doing) of acting, of flowing [*flowing means losing oneself in God*] of suffering and of dying in God, and by dint of loving, either in love, or over love; the less must one be understood and judge in one's paths, if it is not by a similar spirit. *[I believe that this is what St. Paul meant by saying, "the spiritual may judge everything and is judged by no one. (I Corinthians 2:15)]* – I do not say that they are nor believe them to be incompatible; but their faults are very light and very small in front of God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 21)
8. I will only say that those who are not, for the same pride take the true liberty of the saints and true spirituals, in its outward action. Thus it is true that because of the defects, which can be encounter there, there is nothing more difficult than finding true humility in such people, as much as true liberty shows nothing in its outward actions and words. For this same liberty goes beyond all proper interest, as much in oneself as in others. It runs past all fear and human respect, emulating only the glory of God, that these people desire ardently above all else, dying for all which is outward, and even for the practice of it. –



Thus it is possible, that which has nothing of the spirit, sees and tastes of the spirit in the outward actions and words of the true spiritual, as much as the views of the spirit are simple and unique in their elevation penetration and extent, and that they penetrate the infinite truths in the blink of an eye. There were those who oppose them, make their state out of actions of virtue and perfection, acquired and preserved by brute strength. That is why they judge those who are perfect by their own imperfections and defects; and are often hurt by bitterness in their heart, and other interior mortifications; for example, out of defiance and aversion to these spiritual people, no longer able to believe good of them, but by dint of persuasion and very much pain.

Still these people of such low standard are in comparison to the totally lost spirituals, only earth, only senses, only all disorder, only mortifications of their movements and passions within; especially about the achievement of the actions of the others: which would be all the more genuine if they were in authority, because that would give them all license to act thus. [*One reports on this subject about the Blessed John of the Cross in his life, that in the extremity of the pain that he suffered in his last sickness, the Prior of the Convent treated him and persecuted him with an unbelievable hardness, refusing him all which could give him some relief, either in the soul or in the spirit, and procuring for him all the troubles that he could. (See: The Life of the Blessed John of the Cross written by R.P. Joseph of Jesus-Maria Book 3, Chapter 17. See also in Chapters 15 & 19 another persecution that the Definer of the Order brought rise to him around the same time.)*] (Mystic Cabinet, Part 1, Chapter 7)

9. See Operations of God, Number 24.

SECTION 59  
SENTIMENTS (FEELINGS). GOD ABOVE FEELINGS.

CANTICLE

When the heart of man is faithful enough to want to exceed the gifts of God, to not stop itself at God himself, God takes pleasure in filling him up with those same gifts, which he is not looking for. – Here the Wife prefers her God to her spiritual consolations, and to the sweetness of grace, that she felt in sucking the milk of her breast. (Chapter 1, Verse 3)

The affections which are born of your heart, -- are so distanced from things of the earth, that they are above the most excellent gifts, to not stop at me alone. (Chapter 4, Verse 1)

AUTHORITIES

1. St. Dennis: After having spoken admirable of this first cause of all things, he concluded: *[brief it isn't nor does it have in, which may fall below the senses.]* (Mystic Theology, Chapter 4)

2. St. Catherine of Genes: All the sentiments of the soul are so seized and tied together in this love, that they do not know where they are nor what they are doing; they know neither what they have done nor what they must do. (Dialogue, Book 3, Chapter 7)

3. St. Teresa: I said once, and I repeat it again, that he who begins does not remember that there may be caresses and consolations in this, because it is a way of much love to begin such a noble and precious edifice. (Castle of the Soul, Dem. 2, Chapter 1)

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

4. See Communications, Section 1, Number 1.

5. He who wants to lean on the bodily senses a lot will never be spiritual. I say this for those who think that by the sole force and operation of their vile and object senses, they will reach the elevation and forces of the spirit. No, no, no one arrives here, unless the bodily senses dwell outside. It is always another thing when he derives from the spirit some fondness of feeling for the senses, because there may be much spirit in this, *[Difference between being moved by sentiment, or that it gushes out on the senses.]* As in St. Paul, of whom the great feeling that he had for the sorrows of Jesus Christ were redundant in his body *[This is what I called carrying the condition of Jesus Christ. (Short Method, Chapter 8, Number 1)]* so that he wrote to the Galatians “I carry in my body the stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Galatians 6:17] (Lively Flame of Love, Canticle 2, Verse 2)

6. The Soul enjoys here by an admirable manner and participation of all the things of God, his Majesty communicating to it the force, the wisdom, the love, the beauty, the grace and the goodness; because as God is all this, the soul enjoys them all in a single touch of God by a certain eminence: and sometimes from this blessing of the soul he trickles over the body some little unction of the spirit, which seems to penetrate to the bones, in accordance with what David said, “All my bones will say; Lord who is similar to you!” [Psalms 34:10 (or 35:10 KJV)] And as much as all that one can say about it is below the matter, it suffices to say that this feels the eternal life. (Lively Flame of Love, Canticle 2, Verse 4)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

7. St. Bonaventure: There are also sensible comforts and sweets of experience, which are sometimes granted innate in devoted souls, which being genuine, and coming from God, we can believe that they are given to certain apprentices, who do not yet understand clearly spiritual affairs, so that at least they are consoled in God by sensitive matters, since they do not know the truth about the purely spiritual affairs, in which there is a large force, a more certain truth, a more advantageous progress, and a purer perfection. –One must know that several are mistaken, who believe that this, which has no merit per se, may be a big thing. (Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross, Part 2, Chapter 7, Section 2)

## SECTION 60 SIMPLICITY

### SHORT METHOD

The second degree is called by some – Prayer of simplicity. (Chapter 4, Number 1)

That the soul may well be given care to look for another state of mind, that it may be its simple repose. (Chapter 13, Number 3)

It is essential – to leave the multiplicity of our action, to enter into the simplicity and unity of God. – The Spirit of God is unique and manifold; and his unity does not hinder his multiplicity. [Wisdom 7:22] We enter into his unity, when we are united to his Spirit, like hoping by the same place one same spirit with him: and we are multifarious on the outside, in what concerns his wills, without leaving the unity. (Chapter 21, Number 4)

To unite two things as opposed as are the unity of God, and the impurity of the creature; the simplicity of God; and the multiplicity of man; God must operate singularity. (Chapter 24, Number 2)

One cannot be united to God without passivity and simplicity. (Chapter 24, Number 11)

### CANTICLE

But why does he say to his Lover, that she will be hardly beautiful from this double beauty? It is that her eyes and her looks are already like those of doves, in that she is simple, on the inside, not diverting from the view of her God; and outward in all her words and actions, which are without disguise.

This dove-like simplicity is the most sure mark of the progress of a soul: For no longer using deviations or artifices, it is guided by the Spirit of God. The Wife conceives since the beginning the necessity of simplicity, and the perfection of honesty, when she says those who are upright love you; putting the perfection of love in the simplicity and the honesty of this same love. (Chapter 1, Verse 14)

Your eyes by your fidelity, honesty and simplicity are like those of doves. This honesty is for the outside and for the inside. The virtue of simplicity so recommended in the Scriptures, make us act incessantly with regard to God, without hesitation; directly; without reflection, and sovereignty without multiplicity of design, of motives or in practice, but uniquely to please God: and even when simplicity is achieved, one usually does it without thinking. To act simply with your neighbors is to act with ingenuousness, without affectation; with sincerity, without disguise; and with liberty without restraint. These are the eyes and the heart of the dove, which charm the heart of Jesus Christ. (Chapter 4, Verse 1)

The Husband by these words asks of his Wife two equally admirable things; one, that she with respect to him come out of this profound silence, in which she has been up to now: For in all the times of the faith and the loss of God she has been in a great silence, because it was necessary to lower the bottom of her soul into the simplicity and unity of God alone; presently she is wholly consummated in this unity, it wants to give her this admirable agreement, which is a fruit of the consummated state of the soul, knowledge, of the multiplicity and of the unity, without the multiplicity hindering the unity; nor the unity the multiplicity. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. Those who were the first chiefs and masters of our Hierarchy, having been filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit, that God himself, who is above all being, communicated to them, and being sent intentionally by the same divine goodness, in order to proclaim this grace through the world, and to lay it consecutively over the others, as if they were all divine, therefore they were very desirous of attracting the others after themselves, and in order to procure for themselves the good of divine resemblance. But to do this they felt obliged, according to the laws and according to the holy orders, to back and forsake by their doctrines, written and not written, the more than celestial things in sentient images; in variety and in multiplicity, which is one, simple and collected; in human forms, which is wholly divine; under wrappings of bodies and material, which is purely spiritual; and to make us understand the things which are above all being, by means of the things which are familiar and common to us. Which they did not solely for the opportunity of the laymen, to whom even it is not permitted to manipulate the signs and the sacred symbols; but for as much as like I said our Hierarchy is all symbolic, that is to say that it makes use of material signs to adapt itself to our capacity, needing sentient things to raise us through their means more divinely to the intelligible. [*Reasons for which one has been obliged to multiply, by the words and by the figures and symbols, which is simple in oneself. The simple one multiplied by the necessity of expression in order to adapt it to our capacity.*] (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy*, Chapter 1)

2. This very happy nature which is God although by his divine goodness it leaves and juts out in front, to be communicated to all those, who partake in some way of the holy and sacred things which are in it; nevertheless, it never goes outside of the immobile state, and outside of the firm foundation which is proper and natural to it. And it pours

and sends its reasons in proportion over all those who are made similar to it, without always moving from itself, and without being so much either little deprived or loosened in a way that this may be of its state, which is always one and of the same sort. It is the same way with the divine sacrament of the Synaxis: For although he has a principle which is simple, unique, clasped and folded in itself, and though he is multiplied for the love of men, in the holy variety of exterior signs, and though he passes by all other representations of the Divinity which are made by images, if this is nevertheless only of this multiplicity of signs, he restrains himself and clasps uniformly a second time the unity which is fitting to him, and gathers in one, all those who are attracted and led to him. *[I report these passages which seem not to fit man; because the same Saint said elsewhere (See Consistency, Number 1) that we must conform to God to be united with him. God is simple and one; one therefore become simple and one.] (On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy, Chapter 3)*

3. He is the author, the principle, the cause, the essence and the life of all things: it is he who renews and reforms those who sliding and running to vice, by which the image and the resemblance of God are spoiled and corrupted in them; it is he who strengthens those who float in some dirty and impure restlessness. (Union, Number 4) He is the assurance of those who hold firm, the guide who leads by the hand and who draws in themselves those who lean toward and aspire to him: he is the light of those who are enlightened, the principle of initiation to those who are initiated, the Deity of those who are deified, the simplicity of those who are unified, the super essentially first principle of all other principle, the benign distributor of he who is hidden, as much as it is licit to distribute it: and to say shortly, he is the life of the living, the being of the beings, cause and principle of life and being, who produces and preserves the being of beings by his goodness -- . That is why there is almost no treatise nor books of the Holy Scripture, where we do not see that the Deity, presently is praised like a single being and unity, because of the simplicity of the unity of his essence, which has no parts, of a supernatural way, through which like through a force and unifying virtue, we are made one, and all our diversities and multiplicities being gathered, we come to be collected in a God like single being, and in a unity similar to God. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 1)

4. The intelligible powers of the Angelic spirits -, being purified of all matter and multiplicity, understand what is intelligible in the Divinity, spiritually, non-materially and uniformly: and their power and their intellectual action is lightened by a simple purity without mixing. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 7)

5. See Naked (Blind) Faith, Number 1.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

6. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 6.

#### ST. JOHN CLIMAQUE

7. I saw others among these men worthy of an eternal memory, who being all white from old age, and having faces of Angels, had acquired by the fervor of the marks and by the help of God, a most perfect innocence and a most wise simplicity, which had none of this weakening of reason, and of this childish lightness which cause one to scorn the old people of the world. One saw in them on the outside only an extreme gentleness, a wonderful goodness, and an agreeable satiety, without there being anything faint, or deliberate, or made up, either in their words or in their manners: which is not found in many others. And as for the inside of the soul, they only on the one hand yearned for God and for their Lord, like simple and innocent children, who watch their father lovingly; and on the other hand they turned the eye of their soul with a harsh and audacious regard on the demons and on the vices. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 4, Article 20)

8. Know, my Father, that if someone surrenders himself voluntarily to simplicity and innocence, the Devil no longer finds an entry into the soul. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, D. 4, Article 25)

9. These sorts of things are useful and necessary to those who need light and knowledge to practice the virtues, although they are entirely useless to those who act in the simplicity and the rectitude of the heart. For all do not have the light and knowledge and all also do not have the gift of this blessed simplicity, which is a shield against all the artifices of the Devils. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, D. 15, Article 64)

10. The soul that is gentle and peaceable is the seat of simplicity. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, D. 24, Article 9)

11. The soul, which is upright and sincere, is the side of companion of humility; whereas the one, which is malicious and corrupted, is the servant and the slave of pride. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, D. 24, Article 11)

12. Simplicity is a habit of the soul, which makes it incapable of any duplicity, and immobile to all the movements of the corruption of the spirit, and of the depravation of the heart. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 14)

13. Innocence on the contrary is the state of a tranquil soul, which is full of holy joy and exempt from all dissimulation and artifice. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 17)

14. Rectitude of the heart is an honest intention, which does not search for subtleties and detours in order to stray from the truth. It is also sincere in its only simple actions and not made up in its words. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 18)

15. The innocent man is he who is in [*Note the innocence in which he was created.*] natural purity, where his soul has been created by God, and who acts and speaks with everyone according to this same purity. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 19)

16. One of the first qualities of small children is a wholly innocent simplicity, and whereas Adam possessed this happy simplicity, he had as view of the nakedness of his soul, nor any shame from the nakedness of his body. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 24)

17. The simplicity that some have received from nature, is an advantageous quality and an invaluable happiness; but this natural simplicity is very much inferior to super natural simplicity, that we have like grafted on to the wretched root of our corruption and of our malice by the merit of our labor and of our sweat. For whereas the first, which is that of nature, gives us only an aversion to all the dissimulations and to all the artifices; the second as if above nature, procures for us the most sublime humility, and the most perfect gentleness of spirit: and thus whereas the reward of the one will not be great, that of the other will be infinite. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 24, Article 25)

18. Passions are banished from the soul by a perfect simplicity, as if coming from grace, and not from nature. For according to the word of David, [Psalms 7:11-12] God who is just, assists these simple souls. The Lord saves those who have an upright heart, and delivers them from sin, without them feeling it or recognizing it; as children being stripped of their clothes, have almost no sense of their nakedness. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 26, Article 65)

19. An upright heart is preserved pure in the multiplicity of the operations and of the affairs; and its innocent simplicity is like a vessel in which it sails securely. (Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven, D. 26, Article 120)

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

20. The more a man is collected in himself and becomes simple at the bottom of his heart, the more he will progress without pain in the knowledge of things, and will understand those which are more noble, because he will receive from on high the gift of intelligence. The pure, simple and constant soul is not dissipated by the multiplicity of actions; because it does everything to honor God, and because possessing peace within itself, it endeavors on the outside to never inquire into itself. (Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 3)

21. Happy are the simple, because they will enjoy a great peace! (Book 1, Chapter 11, Section 1)

#### HARPHIUS

22. See Oration (Prayer), Section 2, Number 6.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

23. All the splendors which are proclaimed here, are eminently in God in an infinite way; or to say it better, each of these splendors which are reported here, is God, and all together are God; for as much as the soul is united with God, it feels that all these things are God in a simple being, as St. John felt it when he said; [John 1:3] that which has been made though him was [vic]. (Canticle between the Wife and the Husband, Couplet 14)

#### FATHER BENOIT OF CANFELD

24. See Naked (Blind) Faith, Number 9.

25. The reason why this operation must be simple and pure is, so that it does not distance the soul too much from the union and from fruitful love, and does not bring it too close to nature, and does not pull it down too much into itself; but on the contrary, it draws the soul near and puts it immediately into the union, and casts us into the essence of God in distancing us from ourselves, and raising us above nature. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 15)

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

26. The spirit, or to say it better, all man made in a Godly form, in an ineffable manner, is so unique and so simple in his perception, that this ignores all scientific form, images and figures. That if one does not ignore them, because one learned them elsewhere, they are so distanced from the appetite (which never wants but the eminent supreme which it penetrated) that what was before only science to him, is henceforth to him a true appreciation of divine supremacy. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 8)

27. The soul which has reached God by the secret and sentient unction of the Holy Spirit, and which feels itself to be above all created things, of which the exposure to it is so insipid that the spirit blocks this out, like that which the exposure to is so insipid that the spirit blocks this out, like that which is under its feet, or to say it better, like that which is nothing at all: this soul is raised and drawn into God in such a simple and brisk manner, that it is already in some way above discourse, which expresses the divine splendors and perfections. Its present state is of elevation in some simple unity of spirit. Which creates in it a repose and a quietude in simple and naked contemplation of God, which understanding watches through its simple eye, sharply penetrated by his frequent lights and by divine touch. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 1)

28. Supposing that you are beyond and transfused in simplicity of essence, in the objective chasm of the love which is the divine Essence itself; you will find yourself as if without feeling, so much from yourself as from God himself, without being able to nor wanting to act through simple yearnings, which assume formed actions, nor ever through simple and subtle glances, which assume some power to act, and by consequence some disunion and interval of simple and subtle means, of which one has made use of be transformed more, and more perfectly in the essence itself of the Husband.

One is already beginning here to see God simply, without forms and without images, above sense and active forms. All this is annihilated with the life itself of the soul, in this vigorous and super essential heart into which it is transfused; and its active appetite being entirely suppressed by the force of its simple love, it begins to enjoy the Husband purely and fully in simple essence, by the means itself of these simple touches, which expand it and extend it completely differently in simplicity than it had ever felt. There the simple delights are so deep, and simplify so much the soul which feels them, that it seems to the soul to be beyond in the extent of the essence of God, who is the river from which these same delights flow. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 5)

29. This being thus, the soul delights in his Supreme Good in a most simple and tranquil look and repose, which no longer knows what are the unfathomable depths, made by God in itself in most simple and most profound nakedness and extended from itself to God. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 5)

30. These souls are touched only by things outside, and never in their heart; and being simple, as they are all lost and spoiled in God, nothing can attain them nor touch them.

Abundantly such souls do not desire to appear nor go out in evidence to themselves, if they are not put there and drawn out without themselves and without their understanding; or if it is only that they judged, that it was for them very useful or necessary. As for example it happened one time in which the first act of the simple fertile, I say about the most Holy Trinity, communicating to them, in orderly time, shed on them its truths in the understanding, in which time, and during which infusions, simply and divinely pondered in simple contemplation, under most simple forms, these souls could feel obligated to withdraw themselves from these simple hearts for their future necessity. Nevertheless having made ruins of all this, because they dispersed in those original depths, from where they had very fertilely flowed, they cannot doubt, that this has not been made for their whole and total consumption in these same simple and vigorous depths. This is an almost infinite difference between the Simplicity without, and the Simplicity within. The simplification without, always process from objects without. On the contrary the true simplification within proceeds always from interior objects, which show evidently its simple and intimate Object in the eminence of itself, in conformity with what one is.

It is there that the simple heart of the created simple, is received by the unique uncreated simple, to the embraces and to the delight of the simple and unique unity above all fruitfulness; where it is wholly spread, lost and entirely consummated in the ineffable repose of its unique delight. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 9)

31. The Spirit of God dominating a soul removes it as much from all multiplicities, as he is simple and unique in himself. It is enough that when the soul is totally consumed in God and by God, through the force of his divine touch, it may be then and not later clean for the things exterior and capable of going as one says, through heaven and through

earth. In such a way that those who say, that it is a certain sign that one is interior, when one is sufficiently attentive to do his outward actions well, deceive themselves a lot. (*Rules of Conversation for spiritual people*, Number 77)

32. As for a simple and lost love, it is wholly founded and transfused in a simple force, and very abstracted and very pure nakedness of the spirit; not only in the highest part of its essence, but infinitely beyond in God himself.

This is made and is practiced thus extremely diversely, under varied notions and manifestations, accompanied ordinarily by arduous deaths, which suppress the same spirit down to the marrow. And in these extreme agonies the more he flees himself, losing himself in God; so much the more his death finds itself arduous, agonizing and unbearable. But it is in that love finds itself strong [Songs of Solomon 8:6] like death. Happy [Revelations 14:13] are they who die this kind of death in God: for from then on they stop and rest from their own labors, and God henceforth acts and suffers in them as it pleases him. (Letter 19)

33. Simplicity is a noble and excellent virtue; and the more it is genuinely in a subject, so much the more is that subject abstract and lost to all which is visible, sentient and reflective. (Letter 20)

34. When I read your writings and mine, and I see what we must do, to oppose God in the slightest, I am totally confused. To do this as it should be done, our purity should be Angelic as much within as without; within, by remaining simple, unique, equally stretched, without the least effusion of spirit. (Letter 21)

35. To hardly any people can it be known, what is simplicity of the spirit, except he is totally converted to God in spirit, and without reflection on himself. It is he alone that the eminent simplicity fits in supreme abstraction more dead than dying --. The true simple man has nothing, which stops him on the outside; and his is divinely prudent, full of the eminent science of the Saints. (Letter 27)

36. Arrange the entire exterior in the least multifarious paths that you can: for too many precepts and maxims, shows that one is hindered on the outside, ignoring the sweet, savory and simple unity on the inside. Confine yourself then to little of these things that are unique, simple and essential, so that you can experimentally taste of the excellence of the true interior exercises in true simplicity of intention. So many of the multiplicities on the outside are rather searched for, speculated, and learned from books, than simple and unique, and harm the true meditation of the powers in the unity of the heart. (Letter 50)

37. Since we are both simple and small, we must love and console each other, as much by our prayers before God, as sometimes by letters. (Letter 10)

38. Let us say again in few words that simplicity is a loving inclination in the soul, raised more or less nobly and excellently in God, which inclination calls it and attracts it effectively in its depths (heart), which produces it, and draws in at the same time all the powers, high as well as low, to be all collected and merged in him, in unity and uniformity of spirit. (*On Simplicity*, Treatise 1, Number 3)

39. The second state of simplicity is yet more drawn out and lost than the preceding. For it does not even want to reflect on the most simple objects of the spirit, in order to reason deliberately, if the matter does not officially concern us: and the soul is touched neither but by that which is not.

The third and last state of simplicity responds to all of the spirit. It has and does not only all I just said, but yet it holds its subject dead above all apprehension and knowledge, and it is stable and fixed to endure all in a very noble and very strong manner, never leaving from there, for whatever it may be. On which I advise, that all love simplifies in high or low degree, depending on whether the attraction and love have been strong in uniting all, merging all and losing all in God. (*On Simplicity*, Treatise 1, Number 4)

40. The qualities then essential to simplicity are: Love and Charity in one time, Charity alone in another, Light and science sufficient to their state, and prudence to judge and arrange all within, and without, as much for them as for the others. Whosoever is there always makes his charity glisten for all the world to the pleasure and contentment of all.

The effects of this divine charity in its subjects are to see, to feel and to act simply, essentially and of a single look. It believes everything, it hopes for everything, it bears everything, and have all the rest of the divine effects brought to the text of the Apostle. [I Corinthians 13] (*On Simplicity*, Treatise 1, Number 8)

SECTION 61  
DEPARTURE FROM ONESELF. FORGETTING (NEGLECT) ONESELF.

One will have the goodness to pay attention to what I said above on the Departure from faith. (See the note on the Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 3, Verse 1 and in the Article on the Presence of God.)

SHORT METHOD

One must forget oneself and all personal interest. (Chapter 14, Number 2)

How does one pass through God? This is only done in going out of ourselves in order to lose ourselves in him. (Chapter 20, Number 3)

CANTICLE

He orders it [*This is the whole structure of the interior. Notice please, that in this departure from oneself, (which is performed only by mortification, and the purification which causes death and the entire failure in oneself in order to pass through God) I always show the importance, of permitting no natural relief, nor of taking my life in created things, I speak of nothing else in my Writings; because I know, how much it is of consequence to not take the change, and how much it is rare to find souls which deliver themselves entirely to vigorous love in order to let oneself be devoured and consumed by it, without comforting oneself by casting oneself into recreation that they believe to be innocent to alternate their pain: for it is in this place that one quits entirely, or at least one spends life in perpetual agony, without either dying or living. One is not lost in God; because one wouldn't know how to leave oneself; thus one remains, as Deborah says speaking of the Tribe of Ruben, (See the Explanation of Judges 5:16) between two terms to listen to the whistling of the flocks, that is to say, personal reflection and the cries of nature, and feelings which do not want to die. The instance that I quote in all my Writings and to the Directors, and to the directed; for some in order to spare the victim, and have no compassion for it, because it is a cruel compassion, which makes a hung man breath in order to strange him again; and for the others, in order to be left for them to be slaughtered by this great Sacrificer, who only wants pure and innocent victims; {the instance I say} shows that I am far from saying that one must commit crimes; since I want the most innocent satisfactions to be refused. O if one know how much it is of consequence to not elude true, just and vigorous love; there would be no turmoil that one doesn't find gentle.*] to go out. And from where? From itself. How? By renunciation and by the faithfulness to pursue oneself in all matter, without allowing oneself any natural satisfaction and without taking life either in faith or in anything created. And to go where?

In order to enter into God by a perfect surrender of itself. [*That is to say abundantly, which signifies to go outside from oneself.*]

This departure from self, by the continual renunciation of all personal interest, is the interior exercise that the celestial Lover counsels the souls that longs for the kiss on the mouth. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

This soul neglects all interest of safety, of perfection, of joy, of consolation, to think only of the interest of its God. (Chapter 2, Verse 4)

He made it go outside of itself by mystic death. –

My simple and faithful Dove, get up and go out, since you have all the necessary qualities to depart from yourself. –

This departure is much different from that which has been spoken of earlier, [*Such that God is its principle and last goal.*] and much more advanced: for the first was a departure from natural satisfactions, to want to please only its Beloved; but this one is a departure from possession of self, in order to be possessed only by God, and no longer aware of itself, it finds itself only in him. It is a transfer of the creature in its origin. (Chapter 1, Verse 7 & Chapter 2, Verse 10)

O fortunate earth! That they who have the happiness of possessing you are glad! We are all entreated with the Wife to depart from ourselves to enter there. (Chapter 2, Verse 13)

The supreme part of your soul is already beautiful, and it has all the advantages of beauty: you now lack only one thing, which is to depart from yourself.

If the Husband didn't attract his Love outside with so much force and sweetness, she would never depart from herself. It seems that as much as she has formerly found herself collected and [*It is to be noted so that the soul may depart from itself, it must already be confined to its center: this is why as it has tasted on its own center, it has trouble leaving it. But it will well see, if it is faithful, the difference in repose between the created center and that center which is uncreated!*] sunk within; as much does she now feel drawn without, and even with more force: For other forces are necessary to draw the soul outside of itself, than those which sink it in. The sweetness that tastes on the inside through savory meditation, invites it there enough: but to leave this sweetness on the inside to find only bitterness on the outside is very difficult: besides through meditation, it lives and is in possession of itself; but through the departure from itself, it dies and is lost. (Chapter 2, Verse 14)



It is no longer outside of him that you will find him. Go outside of yourself as fast as possible, to no longer be but in him; and it will be there that he will let himself be found. O admirable artifice of the Husband! When he is most impassionate by his Beloved, it is then that he flees with most cruelty: but it is a loving cruelty, without which the soul would never depart from itself and consequently would never be lost in God. (Chapter 3, Verse 1)

The soul having left itself and lovingly passed beyond all the creatures, meets its Beloved, who reveals himself to it with new charms. (Chapter 3, Verse 4)

Jesus Christ invites all the interior souls, which are the daughters of Zion, to go outside of themselves and their imperfection. (Chapter 3, Verse 11)

The soul having passed through to God by the happy departure from itself; it is a repose from which it will never be diverted. (Chapter 8, Verse 4)

The soul climbs little by little out of the desert: for its self is a desert, ever since the soul abandoned it. It is no longer only the desert of faith, but it is the desert of itself. (Chapter 8, Verse 5)

## AUTHORITIES

### ST. DENNIS

1. As for me, after by [*These ascensions are to depart from self and its manner of conceiving, in order to have secure impressions of divine matters.*] holy and spiritual ascensions we have raised our eyes toward the archetypes and the originals of these mysteries, and we have been saintly instructed by knowledge, then we will understand of what nature these impressions are. (*On Ecclesiastes Hierarchy*, Chapter 2)

2. See Union, Number 10.

3. See God teaches the soul, Number 2.

4. See Naked (Blind) Faith, Number 3.

### HENRY SUSO

5. See Annihilation, Number 6.

### RUSBROCHE

6. See Divine Motion, Number 4.

### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

7. He who loves sincerely Our Lord Jesus Christ and his Truth; and who is truly interior and free from dissolute affections, has no pain in giving himself entirely to God, and in raising himself in spirit above self, in order to enjoy a celestial repose in the enjoyment of his Beloved. (Book 2, Chapter 1, Section 6)

8. One cannot reach this state without a great blessing, which elevates the soul, and which transports it above itself. (Book 3, Chapter 31, Section 2)

9. My son, you will enter into and will rest in me, in proportion to how much [*The measure of our advancement in God is the measure of our distance from ourselves.*] you can depart from yourself. (Book 3, Chapter 56, Section 1)

### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

10. The soul reports in this Canticle the method and the manner through which it departed from itself and from all things, as for affection, dying through a true mortification of them all, and of itself, to have the good of living a life of love, sweet and savory in God: and says that this departure outside of self and of all things was made on a dark night, that it understands to be purgative contemplation, as we will say afterwards, which makes the soul renounce itself and all things: And it is saying by this that it got the power to make this departure from the force and warmth that the love of its Husband gave it for this subject in the said dark contemplation; in which it exalts the happiness which it has had from setting out toward God through this night, with such a good success, that not one of the three enemies which are the Devil, the world and the flesh, who always place obstacles in the way, could hinder it, as much as the said purified night of contemplation, put to sleep and killed in the house of its sensuality all the passions and appetites, as far as their conflicting movements are concerned. (*Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 1, Introduction)

11. This night goes pulling the spirit from its ordinary and common sensation of things, in order to raise it to the divine sense which is strange and removed from all human manner, in such a way that it seems to the soul that it is walking outside of itself. (*Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 2, Chapter 9)

12. See Purification, Number 46.

13. For the wounds of love there can be no cure, except from the side of he who made them. That is why the Wife goes out, yelling after he who had injured her with the force of the fire that causes the wound: And it must be known that this departure is understood in two ways; the first is by leaving all things which makes one abhor and scorn them; the other is by leaving oneself through a denial of self, which is made by the love of God, who raises the soul in such a way, that he makes it quit itself and its hinges and its natural ways, calling out for God. This is what it means when it says: **I left, calling out for you.**

As if it were saying: My Husband in this your touch [*It is a painful touch although it may also be wound of love.*] and wound of love, you have pulled my soul not only from all things, but also you have made it go outside of itself, (for in truth it seems that it even pulls it out from the body,) and you have raised it to you crying out and longing for you, already released from everything to attach itself wholly to you. **But you were always fleeing.**

As if it were saying, when I wanted to understand your presence, I did not find you, and I saw myself detached and released from all things, [*This is the most terrible pain of the soul; for then it is neither wholly in itself nor wholly in God; it is as if hung between Heaven and earth.*] without being attached to you, laboring and grieving in the air of love without the support of either you or me. What the soul calls departing in order to go to its Beloved, the Wife in the Canticle calls lifting oneself up, saying [Songs of Solomon 3:2] I will lift myself up, and I will go prowling the city, through the streets and the squares I will look for he whom my soul loves; I looked for him and I did not find him. Here to lift oneself up means spiritually from down low to on high which is the same as departing from self, which is to say from its ways and base low to the noble and sublime love of God. But she says that she remained wounded because she did not find him. This is why he who is devotedly in love, always suffers during an absence: because being already engaged, he awaits from the friend the payment of the gift and the delivery that he made; and nevertheless he does not give it: and being already lost for him, he did not find the desire gain from his loss; since he is deprived of his possession. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 1)

14. **I forgot what I knew.**

Because not only does the soul remain alienated from everyone, but still from itself, annihilated and as if merged in love, which consists of passing from self into the Friend. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 18)

15. Moreover the soul says it has received great messages and many visits from its Friend, where it went perfect and established in its love; in such a way quitting of all things and itself, it surrendered itself to him through a union of love in spiritual engagement, where it received from the Husband great gifts and valuable jewels. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 28)

#### FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

gives and account of

16. St. Bonaventure: The perfection of memory is, that man may be so absorbed in God, that he neglects all things and himself, and that he is resting sweetly in God alone. (*On the Advancement of the Religious Monks*, Book 1) (*Notes on John of the Cross*, Disciple 2, Section 7)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

17. See Melting of the Soul, Number 5.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

18. It is good to know that nature, even in the most advanced, is so much inclined to look for itself and delight in itself, that if one removes one thing from it, it just as soon has recourse to another, in order to rest there and delight in it. That if one removes from it a sentient object it just as soon has recourse to an object of the spirit. If one removed from it those of the spirit, it will make use of God himself, to rest there for itself and for its satisfaction. One must prudently and diligently examine this, to never let spiritual people become attached to themselves through similar reflection, giving the order to pull them from this and from themselves, to unite and attach them to God. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 11)

19. The true Contemplatives are outside of themselves, nakedly, simply and totally merged in God. (Various lights and rules for the superior's section. On varied sorts of abstraction.)

20. I say to you besides all this, that still above this adhesion, which is perceptible to you, but as if outside of you, you must live there in a very naked (blind) faith. (Letter 45)

MONSIGNOR OLIER

21. What a monster is love of self, which wants to see itself in everything, and which can suffer only with great pain the practice and conduct of pure love, which tends always to God and steals us from ourselves, to bring us, to lose us and spoil us in this divine Everything! (Letter 129)

22. I will tell you one word which came to me in the spirit, and which will appear to you perhaps a little severe: It is that God wants to bring the souls of his faithful to the point of destitution, only to tear them from themselves and to hold them suspended above all private satisfactions. He wants them to live always in him, and wants them to look for him in purity, in saintliness, and in honesty, with having regard for themselves, and without returning on themselves. He wants one to see and look at oneself only for him; and the desires that one acts in this unique ruin to please him in everything. (Letter 143)

## SECTION 62 SUFFERING

### SHORT METHOD

Be content with all that God has you suffer. If you love him purely, you will not look for him less in this life on Calvary, than on Tabor (The Mountain in which Jesus was transformed in his glory.)

One must love him as much on Calvary as on Tabor, since that is the place where he most showed love.

Do not do like these people who give themselves away at one time, and take it back the next. They give themselves away in order to be caressed, and they take themselves away in order to be caressed, and they take themselves back when they are crucified; or indeed, they are going to look for their consolation in the creature.

No, you will not find, dear souls, any consolation but in the love of the cross and in complete abandon. Oh, whoever does not have any taste for the cross: [*A starved soul finds bitter things sweet (Proverbs 27:7); because it finds itself as starved for the cross, as it is for its God.*] does not have any taste for God! It is impossible to love God without loving the cross, and a heart, which has the taste for the cross, finds even the bitterest things, sweet, pleasant and agreeable. (See Matthew 16:23)

The cross gives God, and God gives the cross.

The mark of interior advancement is, if one advances in the cross.

Abandon and the cross go hand in hand.

As soon as you feel something which revolts you and which is proposed to you [*It is sometimes proposed to the souls at the beginning of the path in general (even this is ordinary enough) which was proposed to Jesus Christ according to the Apostle (Hebrew 12:2) propositio sibi gaudium sustinuit crucem (Instead of the joy that he could enjoy, he chose to endure the cross.); and also in the particular son some occasions of terrible sufferings. But the loving heart of his God not only accepts them, but innovates itself in them, and in the pain never says, "That is enough."*] as suffering, abandon yourself to God first for this same thing, and give yourself to him in sacrifice. You will see that when the cross comes, it will no longer be so heavy; because you will have really wanted it. This does not prevent one from feeling the weight of it. Some imagine that it is suffering only to feel the cross. To feel suffering, is one of the principal parts of suffering itself. Jesus Christ wanted to suffer all thy severity of it.

Often one carries the cross with weakness, other times with force: all must be equal in the will of God. (Chapter 7)

### CANTICLE

He is mine, says The Mistress I cannot doubt that he gives himself to me at this moment; since I feel him: but he is mine like a bouquet of myrrh. He is not yet like a Husband, that I must embrace in his bridal bed; but only like a bouquet of crosses, of pains and of mortifications; like a bloody Husband and a crucified Lover, (Exodus 4:25) who wants to test my fidelity by giving me a good portion of his sufferings: for that is what he gives to this soul.

To nevertheless mark the advancement of this already heroic soul, it does not say, my Beloved will give me the bouquet of the Cross; but he will himself be this bouquet; for all my crosses will be those of my Beloved. The bouquet will be between my breasts; for a mark that he must be for me a Husband of bitterness, as much for the outside as for the inside. The exterior crosses are little, when they are not accompanied by interior ones: and the interior ones are made much more painful through union with the exterior ones. But although the soul perceives only the cross from all parts, it is however it's Beloved who is himself this cross: and he has never been more present than in this bitterness, during which he remains in the middle of its heart. (Chapter 1, Verse 12)

Oh, God, you agreeably retake your Wife from her wanting to so soon rest in a very flowery bed, before having rested like you on the painful bed of the Cross. I am myself, you say, the flower of the field; a flower that you will not gather in the repose of the bed; but in the field of combat, of labor and of suffering. — You must enter into combat and suffering. (Chapter 2, Verse 1)

His fruit, which is the cross, pain and objection is sweet to my mouth. It is not sweet to the mouth of flesh; for the inferior part finds it bitter and very harsh: but it is sweet to the mouth of the heart, after I swallowed it: and for me who has the taste of my Beloved, it is preferable to all other tastes. (Chapter 2, Verse 3)

This soul no longer thinks of enjoying his embraces, but of suffering for him. (Verse 4)

It is unbelievable how many crosses, disgraces and reversals these souls must devour. (Chapter 3, Verse 10)

I will go to the mountain of the myrrh, because you will no longer find me but in bitterness and the Cross. It will nevertheless be for me a mountain of a very pleasant scent; since the scent of your sufferings will ascend toward me like incense; and it will be through them that I will take my repose in you. (Chapter 4, Verse 6)

I gathered my myrrh, says the Husband; but it is for you, oh, my Wife, for it is your dish, which is only of bitterness, because there is always suffering in this mortal life. This myrrh however is never alone; it is always accompanied by very pleasant scents. The odor is for the Husband, and the myrrh is for the Wife. —

This divine Savior invites there all his Elect, who longs to nourish themselves like him with sufferings with disgraces and with ignominies, with love of his examples and with his pure doctrine, which will be for them a delicious wine and milk. (Chapter 5, Verse 1)

I come to you in this way, to make you part of my disgraces, of my ignominies, and of my embarrassments. Until now, you had a part in the bitterness of my cross; but you didn't have a part in the ignominy and in the shame of my cross. The one is very different from the other; you are going to have a terrible experience in it. (Chapter 5, Verse 2)

The Wife seeing that the Husband speaks of making her part of his ignominies, fears much; and as much as she has been courageous and intrepid to accept the cross, as much as she is afraid of the objection with which she is threatened. Several very much want to carry the cross; but there is almost no one who wants to carry the infamy of the Cross. (Chapter 5, Verse 3)

The more this soul is squeezed and oppressed by persecution; the more it is communicative and charitable to even those who harm it. (Chapter 7, Verse 7)

#### AUTHORITES

One has seen in what I have written on the Purification so many inner sufferings, and even outward ones, that there is little left to say.

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

1. No man will be suited to understanding the matters of heaven, if he does not submit himself to suffering for Jesus Christ the evils of this world. Nothing will be more beneficial for us, and more agreeable to God, than suffering in this way. And if it were your choice, you should rather wish to be afflicted for Jesus Christ, than to be filled with consolations; because you would become then more like the Savior and all the Saints. (Book 2, Chapter 12, Section 14)

#### ST. TERESA

2. From there originates the force to endure the persecutions, and these are the apples about which at one the Wife speaks; (Songs of Solomon 2:5) Fortify me with apples: as if she were saying; Give me, Lord, suffering and persecutions. And truly she desires them and the things in reality follows: for having no other thought than that of contenting God, without having any regard for her own contentment, her tastes is for imitating in some way the very difficult life of Jesus Christ. Now the apple tree I understand to be the tree of the Cross, because it is said in another place in the Canticles; (Chapter 8, Verse 5) Below the apple tree I restored you to life: And the soul which is surrounded by crosses and sufferings, is awaiting a great cure. It is not so ordinarily joyful about the contentment of contemplation, it has a singular delight in suffering; without the practice of virtue consuming and destroying its forces, as does the suspension of the powers in contemplation, if it is very ordinary. (*Conceptions of the Love of God*, Chapter 7)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

3. **You who left me in this mourning.**

One must notice that the absence of the Beloved causes a continual moaning in the Lover; for loving nothing but him, he finds repose and relief in nothing: this is how one will know he who verily loves God, if he contents himself with something which is less than God. [*That is to say, he doesn't like it if he is content with what is not God.*] St. Paul gave well to understand this moaning, saying: (Romans 8:23) We cry in ourselves awaiting the adoption of the children of God. This is the moan that the soul makes in feeling the absence of the Friend, principally when having tasted of some sweet and savory communication it remains barren and alone. –

**You flee having hurt me much.**

As if it were saying: I did not then love enough pain and suffering, that I endure ordinarily in your absence, without you having pierced me with a stroke of your love, increasing the desire for your view, and (See Explanation of the Cantic, Chapter 2, Verse 9) fleeing with the speed of a stag, without letting you understand however little. (*Cantic between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 1)

4. See Departure from Self, Number 13.

5. It seems to he who gives himself to God that the world recurs to him in the imagination, like savage beasts making harsh threats to him, and principally in three ways; the first that he will lack the favor of the world in friends, in credit, indeed even in wealth. The second is another not less cruel way, which is to know, how he will be able to endure never having any pleasure or contentment in the world, and being deprived of all his caresses, charms and sweetness. The third is yet worse, which is to know, that tongues will raise up against him, and must make of him an object and subject of mockery; in short that all will point at him and scorn him. These things are so well presented to some souls that it is difficult for them not only to resist these beasts, but also even to begin and advance one step. Now there are other more generous souls, to which other beasts are presented, which are more interior and spiritual, which is to know

difficulties and temptations, tribulations and several sorts of labors, that God sends and permits to suffer those whom he wants to test like gold in the furnace, according to the assertion of David. (Psalms 33:20 Douay or 34:19 KJV) The troubles of the just are numerous. –

The soul calls the devils, who are the second enemy, strong men; so much do they endeavor with much force to cut it off from the passage of this path, and also because their temptations and their artifices and traps are most difficult to defeat and to discover, than those of the world and of the flesh; joined also with that they escort and reinforce the two other enemies, the world and the flesh, to wage a cruel and hard war against the soul. From where it comes that David says (Psalms 53:5 Douay or 54:3 KJV); And the strong men searched for my soul, whose force Job also speaks about in these terms; There is no power on the earth which is comparable to him, he who has been made in such a way that he fears no one. (Job 41:24)

This means that there is no human power approaching his, and so the only divine power is battling to defeat him, and the only divine light capable of knowing and discovering his intrigues. That is why the soul, which can overcome his force, will not be able to without prayer, and will also not be able to reveal his ruses and his deceits without humility and mortification. For on this subject St. Paul gives these words of advise to the faithful: (Ephesians 6:11-12) Dress yourself in the armor of God to be, the oration and the cross of Jesus Christ in which the humility and mortification that we said find shelter in. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 3)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

6. Dennis the Carthusian: That the spiritual man may have no disorderly or immoderate affection for anything created, that he may have no immoderate delight in decaying things, nor a superfluous dread of losing them, nor excessive sorrow from their loss, nor an inordinate desire to have them; even that he any not be fond of fame, or glory and vain and temporal honor, and that he cares not for or is saddened by the excess of his infamy and his scorn, but rather that he delights in it. (*On the Life of the Recluses*, Article 4 & *Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 12, Section 3)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

7. If he found himself to be someone so faithful to his duty, that he has entirely passed the region of the dying; in such a way that the profound and continual deaths have been admirably removed from him all his own life in the fire of love, and in the bitter and consuming tribulation as much of the spirit as of the body; oh, God, that he would be excellent! But it is such a rare thing to find in this century, that hardly does one meet even one. There is no one who wants to hide himself away. All men want to appear to be, not what they are but what they are not; and to be esteemed and well known as holy; and what men received from God so to love him, changes into their misunderstanding and their eternal injury.

Without a doubt the loving feeling, and even the eternal taste, as much as it may be, is not the true love. The sinners [*He is speaking of sentient love which moves the sentiments, and out of this spiritual love which rebounds from the bottom of the soul into the senses. For this love is so pure that it is incompatible with sin: it is of such a great price, that even God is obliged to love it: it is so uniform, that it would consume in a moment all the dissimilarities and contradictions between the soul and God. It is this love, which would produce perfect contrition in a instant; it is this love, which purges and consumes all the imperfection of its subject, in order to transform it into itself; it is this love which is eternal life: (comment) would it compare with impurity and death? That is impossible. It is therefore about sentient love that he is speaking or rather about the sensitivity, which produces love. For wherever this love is, sin cannot be there; because it cannot come into a heart, but in banishing the opposite. This sentient love of sinners at first purely natural; but when this sensitivity comes to move the heart, and to produce a spiritual movement, then it prepares the heart for love, which is not for an instant disposed in the way that God who like a heavenly dew scatters without cease his charity over all men, finding them disposed and prepared, puts in their heart a beginning of charity and of true love.*] themselves that God wants to draw to himself, are sometimes so full of it that they seem to overflow from it, though they are in mortal sin. It is in suffering, it is in the voluntary cross, it is in the practice of the virtues on occasion, it is in profound humility and in the scorn and objection of oneself, it is in the eternal poverty of spirit to the supreme degree, it is finally of naked love, that the pure perfect and essential love and true holiness consists, such as the holiness is practiced in this life in the eternal pursuit of Our Lord dying completely naked on the cross for our Love.

To explain myself better, it must be said, that God spends not a moment without this love over all men; for it is impossible that God, being in his nature a communicable being, does not communicate incessantly to all the subjects disposed to receiving his communications, as the dew falls on all the subjects who are exposed to it. But as man is born free, he closes himself, he stands back from this divine dew, he turns his back to it, he adds obstacle upon obstacle, to prevent it from penetrating him. What does the feeling do, which is born of some good thing? It moves this man little by little, and removing from him what prevents him from turning himself, next it turns itself to the side of he who spreads and infuses his charity without cease in all hearts. As soon as this heart is turned, and as soon as like the sea it opens itself to the dew, it falls first on the soul; and it is the drops of this more or less abundant heavenly dew, which makes up the more or less of charity. The more the heart is opened to God, the more it receives the abundant plenitude

of this divine charity. But one must know that it is this same charity which makes its own way; no one can do it but itself: it prepares our heart for a greater plenitude with its plenitude; because the nature of love is to dilate: the more it dilates, the more it fills up; for it abhors the void: and although it seems to place the soul in the void and in nakedness it is only based on feeling. It is true that it empties all which is not God; for as charity is God, it wants only him alone, it is compatible with him alone, all the rest are but shadows to him: that is why he makes use of everything to purify his subject, to dilate, extend it, to make it bigger, in order to spread himself there more abundantly. But oh, divine charity, where do you find these hearts, which let themselves, be purified, extended and dilated by your operation? This being infinitely kind and generous is only hard because of our impurity. It is still a lot that you find some hearts, which give you entry. Alas, but you are cramped in these hearts! But you are constrained there, but you are often saddened there! Oh Love! Do you not have the power of a God to act? Must we employ our liberty only in resisting you? That this liberty is disastrous to us, and that it would be advantageous to us if we sacrificed it entirely!

I say it once again, if there were found someone who was nothing else in practice but dying love he would be a Phoenix among men. Perhaps there are some, but believe me that they are not known. While man will never exceed himself, he will always free himself from the cross, to live to the satisfaction of his senses. Even several people that one believes to be excellent, are defeated on this point, and cover themselves in this with the will of God: something, which cannot be deplored enough. To be genuine only up to a certain point is to do nothing. One must give everything, and always put life in this agony, without for any allegiance or consolation: and if the Saints had not so eternally agonized, God would not be so glorious in them, nor they in him. He who never eats his fill of sufferings and anguish, in their abundance and in their duration, is most holy, and consequently is most marvelous among men: this is what I have not yet known among the living. It is true that it is enough for a weak body to endure what it can: and the few in this sense, indeed the desire within the Saints is well known to all. But by necessity the spirit must be infinitely strong so as to never be shaken, nor touched by disturbances and slander, for which the true Saints are often persecuted wrongly and without cause, although they who treat them thus do it ignorantly and with the best intention, it seems to them. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 6)

8. They still love enough to do and to endure, as much on their own part as on that of the creatures and they receive and sustain it with all humility, patience, force and joy of spirit, as much as it is possible for them, all which is troublesome happens to them not as if coming from the hand of the creatures but purely from the liberal hand of God, and as effects of his infinite love. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 9, Section 18)

9. This is why the faithfulness of the Wife is perfectly tried; for showing herself generous and constant in enduring the absence of her Beloved, she suffers extremely, not searching for, as I said, consolation either without or within, either directly or indirectly. She consoles herself only with her own sorrows, with her moans and with her most loving groanings, by which she expresses to her Husband as she can her sad, mournful and anguished regrets; if ever there remains for her any brisk breath for this: if not, she moans yet more sorrowfully in her total suspension in her sufferings, distress and mortal listlessness, by the continual glance of her spirit toward her Husband. The Wife suffers more in this way that one can express, being in this manner attentive and detained with regard to her Husband, without her thinking of it, while the action of her powers is totally suspended. Although she has often experienced the severity of the absence of her Husband in the previous means and of grace and of love, this one is always much more painful. It seems to her here that she is wholly new and inexperienced in the matter of sufferings, because of the rigorous effects that she feels, wholly different from the previous ones; and she does not know, in a manner of saying if she is dead or alive nor if she is of herself, or of her Husband. The single consolation that she has, it is that no creature can console her in the loss that she thinks she has had. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 15)

10. It is this perfection that one must reach with an ardent desire; and having reached this, one must remain there so as to fully conform our life to that of Our Savior. Now to do this as is necessary, nothing is to be as desired as tranquil suffering. For this consists of the full felicity of loving spirits in this present life, of enduring this loving war, and sustaining it in full peace of heart and of spirit, and in great delights; which will not always be sooner, than one is dead to all things through the inside. While one feels repugnance for something, it is a sign that the heart is not wholly full of God, nor the spirit wholly subjected to his Majesty. One must therefore always die to these repugnancies, and if they last all one's life, one must bear them lightly, and stop there. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 1)

## SECTION 63 TRANSFORMATION

### CANTICLE

God being our final end, the soul can without cease flow out into him as if at his term and his center, and to be mixed and transformed there, without ever coming out of it: in the way that a river, which is a body of water came from the sea, and very distinct from the sea, finding itself outside of its origin, endeavors through varied disturbances to near the sea; until having finally fallen, he loses himself and combines himself with her, in a way that he was lost and combined before going out of it. –

It is this mixture that St. Paul calls (2 Corinthians 3:18) transformation; and Jesus Christ (John 17:11, 21, 23) united, sameness and consummation.

Now this happen about when the soul loses its own consistency to subsist only in God. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

One must know that the soul although having arrived in God, raises itself little by little, and perfects itself in this divine life, until it arrives at the eternal sojourn. It raises itself imperceptibly into God, like the dawn, until it comes to its perfect day and its accomplished midday, which is the glory of Heaven. (Chapter 6, Verse 9)

The Wife no longer fears losing God, because it is not only united but also altered in him. (Chapter 7, Verse 11)

The Mistress asks that her union be more sunk in. Although the transformed may be in a permanent and durable union, it is nevertheless like a Wife who applies herself to the needs of the house, and who in vain comes and goes without ceasing to be a Wife.

She asks for one more blessing, which is only accorded late; and that is that the outside be transformed and altered like the inside: for the inside is transformed a long time before all the outside is changed; in such a way that for a long time certain slight weaknesses remain, which serve to cover the grandeur of grace, and which do not displease the Husband. However they are like a type of weakness, which in some way attracts the scorn of the creatures.

That he may then transform me, says she, on the outside, so that no one scorns me any longer. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

### AUTHORITIES

#### ST. DENNIS

1. See Consistency, Number 1.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

2. This is man while he is still in the course of this life, [*This is all the structure of the interior.*] works to combat his immoderate passions and desires, to which he has given arms against himself, in letting himself go through the pleasure of enjoying fleeting things; and that putting his confidence in the help of the grace of his God, he comes at the end to defeat them, being besides faithful to serve him with a pure and upright spirit; he will indubitably be renewed and reformed by this uncreated Wisdom, from which all things take their forms and their perfection, as well as the first degree of being; and passing from the multiplicity of perishable goods subject to change, to the simplicity of the single immutable good, he will [*All goods which are not God himself, are very much perishable.*] reach the enjoyment [*Note about God himself, and not about his gifts. The Holy Spirit is the gift of gifts.*] of God himself by the Holy Spirit which is the gift of God.

This is the manner in which the carnal man that he was becoming spiritual, and finds him in a state to judge all things, with no one able to judge him (1 Corinthians 2:15) loving his Lord and his God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his spirit, as his neighbor like himself; that is to say, of a pure love, and which keeps nothing of the flesh and blood, as we must love ourselves. (*On the True Religion*, Chapter 12)

3. The Angels and the Blessed, all the intellectual substances, cannot have any happiness or perfection but from God; in a way that they [*True happiness consists in looking for this happiness in God alone through genuine love; and all the unhappiness comes from looking for, desiring and making his happiness in himself.*] are only as happy as much as they know, nor as perfect as much as they carry themselves by their love toward this first principle of all things. (Union, Number 18) Religion must then [*Effects of Religion in us: All this is consistent with the Manuscripts (in the Explanations of the Holy Scripture printed since.)*] link us and unite us to the only all powerful God, and must unite us to him [*St. Augustine proves that the Christian Religion must have for an end the immediate union without means: it is certain that the interior spirit of the Christian Religion guides us to this.*] immediately, and without the intervention of any creature, that this interior light, which makes us know God, is communicated to our soul; and as this light is nothing other than eternal life, lets us all adore this truth in the Father and with the Father, who expressing it perfectly and without any difference, is the form and the model for all creatures, since there are none of them which come from the



unity: which shows to them who have open eyes of the spirit, that all things have been made by this primitive forms, which alone expresses perfectly what all the other things search for and imitate in some manner. –

Let us then adore this Holy Trinity, of a single and same substance: it is the unique God, in whom is found the principle which made us, and the ineffable gift through which he conserves us and makes us subsist; this God whom we had abandoned and from whom we had lost the resemblance, and who did not want to let us perish; this principle toward which we return, this model that we follow and to which our renewal makes us true, and this goodness, source of all grace, which performs our reconciliation, this sovereignly good God, who is the author of our being; this *[As one he calls us to the unity; as a likeness of the Father, he calls us to conformity.]* substantial likeness to the Father, by which the image *[The Translator: This image is retraced in proportion to how our heart is simplified, withdrawing from all the multiplicity of the objects which dissipated it: (How the image of the Word is retraced in us. See Short Method, Chapter 21, Number 5)]* of this sovereign unity is retraced in us; and this *[Note eternal peace which keeps us united to God.]* eternal peace which holds us united to God, who only had to speak so to make all that is of nature and of substances; this eternal Word through which he made them; this ineffable gift of his goodness, which helped the creatures that he drew from the nothing by his word, find grace before his eyes, he very much wanted to not let them perish entirely; this unique God who as Creator gave us being and life, who as Mender has us enter through the renewal that he makes in us, into a life consistent with the rules of the true *[This true Wisdom is nothing other than the Wisdom of Jesus Christ; and not the false wisdom that the world values, and that Jesus Christ condemned.]* Wisdom, which as the Holy Ghost has us reach the blessed life *[To love and enjoy God is the sole felicity of all spiritual substances. Is this not then a strange misfortune to deprive oneself by oneself of this dole and essential felicity?]* in communicating his love to us, and making us delight in him: Finally this only God from whom, through whom, and in whom are all things: to him goes honor and glory in all the centuries of the centuries. *[So be it, even at my expense.]* So be it. (On the True Religion, Chapter 55)

4. To want to be happy is to look for God; to effectively be happy, is to have found it and possess it. Now to look for him is *[This pursuit or this desire is not the transformation: For the transformation, which consists in being transformed and like melted, not in his substance, in such a way that one is no longer but a same thing with God, but in reality of will and of truth, in the sense that I am going to tell, is incompatible with the search and sentient desire; but not with the desire suited to this state which is the load of love, according to what is written (In the Confessions of St. Augustine, Book 13, Chapter 9): My love is my load. It is therefore to speak improperly, to say that the soul does not desire since it is certain that it always desires: But there is a time when the soul feels its desire; then it knows that it desires, and it says; I desire: another one comes, when not knowing and not distinguishing its desire, its ignorance makes it say, that it does not desire; and it can say nothing else, unless a super natural light makes it see otherwise. This super natural light then makes it understand, that sentient desire is the pursuant for God, that the desire, which is not perceived in the enjoyment of the good, which one was looking for, is the weight of love. The search is made from love; and it is a desire for love: but enjoyment is the possession of love itself; and this desire which is made in love, is nothing but the weight of love which cannot be distinguished from this same love, like the weight which sinks us in the sea, does not let us distinguish anything but the same sea; instead of the desire to reach the sea, letting us distinguish all our steps, and the desire to reach there is very sentient: but when one has plunged in there, one no longer distinguishes anything in it but itself, without stopping nevertheless from always sinking deeper. For if the sea was infinite, isn't it true that one would sink infinitely, without any other action or distinction than the sea. And it is this indistinct sinking into God, which is the desire of the soul of this degree.]*

This shows the difference between the transformation of the Mystics and the error of the Manichaeus, who believed that our souls were portions of the substance of God, which can never be, God being an indivisible substance, but also communicative: in so far as communicative is then an evaluation of God, and not a portion of his substance. We are transformed in God by love, which making our will pass into the will of God, it no longer has certain particular functions, which were making it imperfect and unlike God.

The transformation of our spirit is made, when losing its particular lights, it lets itself be filled and lit up by a naked, simple and general truth, which chases away so much all which is opposite it, either error, or opinions, or confusions of all kinds, multiplicity of reasons, that it seems to change all into itself. It is true that this light of truth and this will of God changes the nature of the operations of the spirit and of the will in conforming them to the former, in such a way that understanding, which by its crude operation does understand things only successively, and climbing from the ones to the others, or comparing the ones with the others, is surpassed by the pure and naked light of truth; a light consistent with this truth which is a naked (blind), confused, general faith which embraces its object all of a sudden, without succession or comparison, without reasoning, is given to this understanding. Now this simple disposition of naked (blind) faith in the spirit, being consistent with the truth, attracts the truth; and this truth no longer finding in the spirit the annoyances which are opposed to it, because faith purified it of them, it illustrates so much understanding that the spirit appears transformed in this same truth, like the air penetrated by rays of the Sun dazzles the eyes in the same way as the Sun itself, although the air is not the Sun, nor the Sun the air. It is certain that the spirit always preserves its substance and even its created form: but it is so much altered as to its operation, that it receives the naked truth unadulterated; because it has been set out for this by naked (blind) faith: and this clear and naked truth

over comes so much of all the lights of our spirit, that they appear extinguished. They are not nevertheless, but they are filled with another light, which is this light of naked truth, proper to the purified spirit. If I say something which is not good, I subdue it: but as I already said, what I write appears to me always new, and it passes through me without being of me.

The transformation of the will is also made of this sort. The will of God purifying little by little the clashes and opposition of our will, it attracts the will of man to itself through conformity of such a sort, imprinting it with characteristics proper to this conformation; in such a way that removing from man the proper use of his will, in what it has contrary to the will of God, the soul no longer finds in itself anything but the will of God, as for the action of this will which only wants what God wants. God changes it so much into his, leaving it only the impressions of his divine wants, that the soul no longer distinguishes its own will. Which does not prevent its will as essential portion of an indivisible soul, as well as its spirit, from always subsisting; but the use of the will, in what it has contrary to God, is changed into such a uniformity of divine wants, that it is said to be made the will of God. But this can never be taken substantially, such as I showed in the Explanation of the Canticle (Chapter 1, Verse 1), where I say that the being of man subsists in it whole, and it not transformed differently the like I just explained. I would like to be able to explain it as clearly as I conceive it; but your science will compensate for the failings of my expressions.

One must know that all this transformation of spirit and of will is made through love: for truth is the light of love, and love is the heat. They are distinct from love are found conjoined and inseparable in the enjoyment of God. ] to love him; and to possess him, it is not transformed and as melted in his substance, in such a way that one is only a something with him. It is being close to him until touching him, but in affable manner that the love intelligence can conceive: in such a way that one is not only enlightened, but surrounded and penetrated by this truth and his infinite holiness: for he is the light by essence, and all the excellence of our nature consists only our being capable of being enlightened by it.

Now if the sovereign felicity is nothing other than the possession of God, it follows that the most important of the commandments as that which guides us most surely to this felicity, is without doubt the one that orders us to love the Lord our God (Matthew 22:37) with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our spirit: [*How do we love God with all our spirit? It is when the truth and love united made us uniform and transformed in God. Then one loves with all the spirit, since this truth, which is the clarity of love, penetrates our spirit in the proportion that its heat penetrates our heart or our will: for the will is the heart of the soul, as understanding is for the spirit. Our spirit being transformed in the light of truth, and our will into the heat of effectual love; we love God with all our heart, and with all our spirit: We love him with all our soul, since it is our indistinct powers which make up his indivisible all: we love him with all our might; because in loving this way our strength multiplied and divided in all the objects of the outside, is found collected and gathered in this single and uniform love.*

Pure love suffers neither division nor sharing, because it is sole and sovereign: being sole it abhors division; being sovereign, it cannot endure partition.

All other love is shared; there is only the pure love disengaged from all multiplicity, such that the interior state requires it in all its parts and in its totality, according to how it is explained in this enlightenment, which is the only love without partition and without division. It is without partition; since one walks by the destitution and the separation of all created objects one is gathered, and one is collected into a single and unique object, which is God. It is truly our beatific object, when it purged us of all the opposing forces, which prevent it from reigning sovereignly in us. In such a way that as I think I've already said, (See Below, Number 27; the Note. See also Loss, Number 30; the note), the interior way is an indivisible all, composed of parts that one cannot touch without destroying it: in such a way that if you admit into it one part and remove the other, you destroy it. All or nothing is necessary, if you admit its principles and its beginning, as well as its progress, you must admit its consummation and its end; without which it is a rough model of the truth of the interior, but it is not the perfect interior.

That if one says that one puts back the consummation into the other life; I say that in this other life there will be the consummation of grace and of glory, the consummation of all growth and of all merit, the fruit, the recompense and the clear enjoyment of the truth of the interior: but as for the interior in itself, it must have its totality composed of these parts perfected and consummated in this same totality from this one's life. It has its beginning, which is nothing other than the perfect conversion in all the senses that the perfect meditation demands from it; its progress, which is this hunger and this continual pursuit of God through the removal, the fleeing and the purification of all which is opposite him; the aim of this state is repose in the Sovereign Good that one looked for and desired. But one must notice that this repose is in the enjoying of God, as much as one can in this life: Which does not prevent one from always advancing in him: So the state is consummated as for the activity of the creature, but it not consummated nor achieved as for the perfecting operation of God. I believe that one can make use of the comparison of the human body, which is said to be perfect, when it is composed of all its parts: and although there are blind people, lame people, one does not say by this that one must be like this, nor that the body should lack parts; but one describes a body as perfect when it lacks nothing: And besides this perfection there is the beauty and the flash of perfection, when all its parts are not only whole, but when they are in the right proportions that they should be, when the coloring is added. When one paints a perfect body, one paints it of this kind, and everyone agrees that the beauty of this body is a perfect beauty, although it is certain that its perfect is nothing in comparison with that which it will have in the glory. Now to show us that the

body does not have the perfection of glory, however beautiful it looks to us, one does not remove the essential parts, which compose its whole. It is the same way with the interior. Let us say that its perfection will be wholly different in the other life; but let us not remove any of its parts which make up this admirable whole, which is the masterpiece of the love and the power of God, since according to the testimony of the Blessed John of the Cross, that I already gave an account of, (See Purification, Number 32) God did more in purifying and reforming man than in creating him. One can see in the general order of the world that which I am advancing, for the particular order of the soul. A fiat drew all the creatures from the nothingness, the death of a God was necessary, to repair, purify, renew and re-establish them in the order of God.

The Translator of the Book of St. Augustine after this annotation says; He who loves God looks for him, and he who looks for him finds him: adds, that since as one has seen, to love God is to look for him, and whoever looks for him, finds him, he comes unfailingly to possess him, that is to say as one has seen in Chapter 10. That he is happy and he is thus no matter what happens to him, since the good and the evil contribute equally in bringing him to what makes his happiness: all happiness in life consists in walking incessantly toward God without stopping for all the prosperousness or adversity, which come to us and in resting there above all the evils and the good.] And this is what results from what St. Paul says, that everything turns to good for those who love him; and from what he adds a little lower, that neither death, nor life, nor the Angels, nor virtues, nor the present evil, nor the good to come, nor that which is most elevated or most deep, nor any other creature would know how to separate us from the Love of God, which is communicated to us by Jesus Christ Our Lord. (Romans 8:28, 38-39)

One must then only have understood that we just established, to be persuaded of it, to see clearly, that if it is true, as if we could doubt that all turns to good for those who love God, it is then what is best for us, which is to say, that he is the Sovereign Good, towards the acquisition of which we must work with an eagerness which may make us scorn the others, and to whom everyone agrees that all our love is due: Therefore he orders us not only to love him, but to love him in such a way that we may love nothing else.

For this is what Scripture wants to make us understand when it directs us to love him with all our heart, with all our soul and all our spirit. And if it is true for that matter as if we could doubt this either, that there is nothing which can separate us from the love of God, nor consequently make us [The Translator adds, that we could only lose him in ceasing to love him.] lose him; is it not more clear than the day, that he is the most solid and the most sure, as well as the greatest and the most excellent of all goods? [Although this may be properly for the union, I put it here immediately.] How could one separate us from the love of this ineffable Good, in threatening us with death; since the part of ourselves by which we love him would know how to die only in ceasing to love him? For the death of the soul is nothing but the extinction of the love of God in it; and [If charity is lost as soon as one loves something more than God, it is consistent that it is weakened as soon as one loves something with God, although one loves it less than him. For as what we love strikes the feelings, it is to be feared that out of a dependent love we do not make an equal love; which weakens charity so much, that it has almost no more life: when inclination has come this far, it soon becomes divine charity, making a sovereign love out of a subordinated charity.] this love is extinguished as soon as it loves something more than God, which is to say, as soon as it looks for some other good preferable to that one.

How could one separate us from it by the promise of life; since this would be, as if in promising us Water one was cutting us off from the source? How could the Angels separate us from it; since [Strength of a soul united to God equal to that of the Angels.] the strength of a soul, which is united with God, is not inferior to that of the Angels? [The Translator: The Angels themselves not having any but through their union with God.]

How could the virtues; if one understand by this word whatever it may be, something in the Universe, the union of the soul with God raises it above the Universe? Or if one understands the virtues to be the dispositions of the soul which are rectitude and perfection, so far are the virtues from being able to separate us from God, that if they are in the others, they give us help in uniting ourselves in him; that if they are in us; it is through them that we are [The Translator: St. Augustine shows in Chapter 13, that there is only charity which can unite us to God. This corresponds well with what he says here, that it is through virtue that we are united to him; since as one will see in Chapter 15, all virtue is charity.] united to God.

How could the wicked separate us from him; since they are accordingly less sensitive to us, [Annotation of the same: The union from God is the only genuine alleviation of the evils of life. But one always rather looks for all other alleviation than this one.] than we are united to him that they seem to want to separate us from?

How could the promises of some good to come separate us from God; since there are no promises as solid and sure as his, nor any good as genuine as that which he promises us; since he is himself the greatest of all good, and since he is even already [God is present to those who are united to him, or because they have a real experience of his presence, or as Sovereign Good that they already possess in same manner by their union, which is a beatitude begin.] present to those who are united to him in the manner that one must be?

How could that which is most elevated and deepest, separate us from God; since if one understand by these words, the sublimeness or the depth of science, I know that curiosity is one of the things that I must avoid in order to not separate myself from God; since in vain do the most knowing men strive to separate me from, on the pretext of pulling me from error; since I know that [Annotation: Which is the source of error in which men are plunged.] no one is in error but in being separated from him? If one understands by these words heaven and hell, how could the promise of

heaven or the fear of hell separate me from; since I know that heaven is his work, and that if I separated myself from him, I would have nothing to fear from hell?

Finally in whatever place one puts me, how could one separate me from God since he is everywhere? This couldn't be; if some sort of space or place could close him in or contain him. (*On the Morals of the Church*, Chapter 11)

#### RUSBROCHE

5. We pass from clarity into clarity, and by the created light of divine grace, we are raised into the uncreated light, which is God himself; we are introduced and transformed in our eternal image which is the Holy Trinity. There the Father finds us and loves us through his Son; the Son finds us, and loves us with the same love through his Father; the Father with the Son embraces us in the unity of the Holy Spirit. (*On the Seven Guards*, Chapter 17)

6. See Proper Operations, Number 6.

#### HARPHIUS

7. This Deification is above all reason, and is known only by experience. The things, which are above it, can easily deceive reason; he who is fully enlightened by God, finds and possesses the truth without falsity and without error. (*Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Chapter 24)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

8. I no longer see any union, because I can no longer see anything but God alone without me. I do not know where I am, nor look to know, nor want to have any news about it. I am also drowned in the source of love, and in this gentle fire which surpasses all measure, as if I were engulfed [*This is an experience of the previous doctrine. It seems to me that one can make use of the comparison of fire and wood, to prove of what nature is the transformation: for as the fire genuinely communicates its qualities to the wood, without altering it in nature, although it nevertheless changes it in such a way in its qualities, that it has all those of the fire, however its being remains different from that on the fire; it is the same way with the Transformation. (See Purification, Number 45)*] in the sea, able to see or feel only the water; in such a way that I can no longer understand anything but whole love, which melts me down to the marrow of the soul and of my body. (In Her *Life*, Chapter 22)

9. See Annihilation, Number 12.

10. See Creation, Number 5.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

11. As this transformation and union cannot fall in sense and human ability, the soul must perfectly and voluntarily deprive itself of all which can be in it; I say about affection and about will, as for what concerns it; for which will prevent God from doing in a resigned, deprived and annihilated soul what will please him. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 4)

12. From where it comes that God is more communicative to the soul which is more filled with love, which consists in having its will more consistent with God's; and that Soul which has it wholly conformed and similar, is totally united and transformed God supernaturally. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 5)

13. God inflames the will with divine love; in such a manner that the will is no longer but divine, loving not less than divinely, made and united in one with love and the divine will. And memory the same, as also the affections and the appetites are all altered divinely according to God: and so this soul will already be wholly heavenly and more divine than human. (*Dark Night*, Book 2, Chapter 13)

14. Now in this sketch of faith there is another sketch of love in the soul of the lover, which is according to the will, in which the figure of the friend is sketched in such a manner, and is depicted in it so jointly and so vividly when there is union of love, that it is true to say, that the friend lives in the love, and the love in the friend; and the love makes such a sort of resemblance in the transformation of the loved ones, that one can say that each is the other and that both are one. The reason is, because in the union and transformation of love, the one gives possession of self to the other, and each leaves itself, gives itself and exchanges itself for the other; and so each lives in the other, and the one is the other, and the two are one through transformation of love. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 12)

15. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 6.

16. The soul having going outside of everything, -- transforms itself into God, who is he who is called garden, for the sweet and delectable place that the soul finds in him. (Spiritual Fertility, Number 6) Now one does not reach this garden of full transformation, which is already joy, delight and glory of spiritual marriage, without passing first through the engagement, and through the loyal and communal love of fiancés: all the more after the soul has been engaged for some time in a whole and sweet love with the Son of God, after the same Lord calls it and puts in this flowery garden to consummate with him this most happy state of marriage, where such a union of the two natures is made, and such a communication of the divine to the human is made, that neither one changing its beings, each seems to be God; although during this life this cannot exist perfectly, although this may be above all that one can say and think. – It enjoys a delight of the Glory of God in the substance of the soul already transformed in him. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 28)

17. We enter into these cellars.

It is as much as if the soul were saying; there we will transform ourselves in the transformation of new accounts, and of new acts and communications of love. For although the soul, when it says this, is already transformed, because of the afore said state, this does not nevertheless prevent it from being able to have new illustrations and transformations, new (consciousness) knowledge and divine lights: on the contrary there are very frequent illuminations of new mysteries, that God communicates to the soul in the perpetual communication, which is between him and the soul; indeed he even communicates this to it in itself, and it enters as if anew into God, according to the account of these mysteries that it knows in him, and in this knowledge again it loves him very nobly and very closely, transforming itself in him according to these new accounts; and the flavor and delight that it also receives for the moment again, is totally ineffable. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 37)

18. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 9.

19. See Creation, Number 11.

20. See Communication, Section 1, Number 2.

21. See Understanding, Number 21.

22. In this state this liaison looks like such a fine cloth, because it is very spiritualized, improved or refined that the Divinity does not let anything to shine through it; and as the soul feels the force of the other life, it sees the weakness of this one, and the cloth seems very delicate to it, indeed even to be but a spider web: -- and still it is less in the eyes of the soul which is already so enlarged. For being elevated to a divine way of feeling, it feels and judges in the way of God, in front of which, as the Prophet says, a thousand years are like the yesterday, which has passed (Psalms 89:4 Douay or 90:4 KJV); and according to Isaiah. All peoples are as if they had no being at all; and all is before the soul in this value and in this worth: because all things are nothing to him, and it still to its eyes is nothing; God alone is all things to it. (Isaiah 40:17) –

God in order to consummate it and raise it more from the flesh makes in it glorious and divine in vestures, in the guise and form of meetings, which are genuinely it, deifying the substance of the soul and making it divine. In which the being of God absorbs the soul, as thus he met it and suddenly transfixed to the Holy Spirit, whose communications are impetuous when they are fervent, as this one is, in which, because the soul tastes keenly of God, it calls it sweet, not because the other touch and encounters that it receives in this state, are not sweet and savory, but because of the eminence that this encounter has above all the others. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verse 6)

23. See Feelings, Number 5.

24. See Union, Number 58.

25. See Communication, Section 1, Number 4.

26. It is a mystic and affective gift of the soul to God; for there it seems truly to the soul that God is its, and that it possesses him like the adopted child of God, with ownership of right, by the grace that God made to it out of itself: It gives the right to its Beloved, who is the same God who gave himself to it. In which it pays all that it owes: for willingly it gives him all so much with pleasure and inestimable joy, giving the Holy Spirit as if its own, with a voluntary deliverance, so that he is loved as he deserves; and in this the soul receives an indescribable delight in seeing that it gives to God a thing which fits him according to this infinite Being. For though it may be true - (See Union, Number 62, and (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verses 5-6)

27. In this awakening that the Husband makes in this perfect soul, all is perfect, [*All the states of the interior life, when it is genuine and profound, are so much related the ones to the others, and assume so strongly the necessity of the ones for the others, that one could not deny one without denying them all, nor dismember them without making them all defective and removed from one of its parts. This is of large consequence and merits attention.*] for it is he who makes all in the sense which it has been said. (*Living Flame of Love*, Cantic 4, Verse 3)

FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS-MARIA

gives an account of

28. St. Bernard: See Melting of the Soul, Number 2.

29. D. Barteleme des Martyrs: See Propriety (Ownership), Number

30. Albert the Great: See Pure Love, Number 29.

31. Richard: The spirit seems to become feeble so going from the human to the divine, so much it is no longer itself. (Book 5 on the *Contemplation*, Chapter 12) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

32. Rossignolius, who says, that St. Gregory of Nazianze has designated this union as Deification; others as Deiformity. (Book 5 on *Perfection*, Chapter 24) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

33. St. Augustine: to whom Our Lord said: I am the meat of the strong: Grow, and then you will eat me: You will not change me nevertheless into your substance, as it happens with bodily nourishment; but it will be you who will be changed into me. (*Confession*, Book 7, Chapter 10) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

34. Albert the Great: It is through love alone that we convert ourselves to God, we transform ourselves into God, we adhere to God, we are united to God and are one spirit with him.

There is nothing sharper than love, nothing more subtle or penetrating, and it never rests until naturally it has gently penetrated all virtue, profoundness and totality; and it wants to make itself one thing with the loved one, and if it can, the same thing as the loved one. –

For love is of a unitive and transformative virtue, transforming the lover into the loved one, and the loved one into the lover, so that the one of the lovers is reciprocally in the other, as intimately as he can. (*On Attachment to God*, Chapter 12) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

35. Dennis the Carthusian (Monk): In this transformation of the spirit into God, the spirit itself flows out of self, and default; and leaving itself with whole ownership of itself, and of other things, it is plunged and sunk in melted and liquefied, absorbed and engulfed in this onto ineffable, most simple and interminable abyss, and also in this inscrutable and inaccessible darkness, and in order to understand all together, it is annihilated and lost: but it lives in God; and being with him made, pure and free of all ownership, mixture and affection, it is made one thing, one spirit, one soul, one being, one felicity; for it does not receive or admit anything else: because it has passed into the deiform simplicity, the influence of God drawing it inwardly, and the contact raising it alienates the soul from itself, and transports it like in one new being: not that in all this the nature and the existence of the creature is changed or ceases to be, but because the making is exalted and the quality deified. (*On the Solitary Life*, Book 2, Chapter 10) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 16, Section 4)

FATHER BENOIT OF CANFELD

36. The soul hates to death all which can cause some pleasure to be felt, or have other thoughts of itself, or which persuades it that it is one thing and its Husband another, in whom it desires that all creatures be melted, liquefied, consumed and annihilated. Here it is understood and receives this essence in itself, not like a vase receives something, but like the light of the moon that of the Sun. Here it spreads its pure and chaste arms, to more closely embrace and clasp its Husband; but it finds itself more closely embraced and clasped: here it opens the capacity of its spirit in order to swallow this abyss; but on the contrary it finds itself happily absorbed, and only knows how to work to satisfy the impetuosity of this love: it remains solely in a pure, simple and constant conversion and adhesion to God, to which it remains so immutably attached, that as speaks the Apostle, it redresses itself (Romans 13:14, Ephesians 4:24): for by this fixed look it sees him uniquely; by this simple conversion it diverts itself from all the creatures; and by the immutability of this one it forgets them all, so that it understand, loves and remembers only him: and so truly as the Apostle says the soul dresses it and is transformed into him. –

This vast rouge of annihilation is this solitude about which the Husband speaks in Hosea: I will lead her into solitude and there I will speak to her heart. (Hosea 2:14) But all the more is this immense space of annihilation none habitual to it, for having seen the bottom of it by experience, as well as this excellent love for being melted and transformed in him; from there comes that their effect is continual, to know the custom of union, or the continual assistance and near vision of this essence. –

All this imperfection is here purged; considering that the soul discovered in it, and experimentally tasted, like its Husband is more inside it than itself, and because of the degree of continual and habitual union it occupies itself always with him, without doubting or hesitating any longer: in a way that such a friend always lives in the light, and always with the heavenly Husband, without the darkness, death or the Devil being able to harm or get near it: but (Habakkuk 3:5) the Devil with go forth from below his feet, death will flee from before his face; and (Psalms 138:12 Douay or 139:12 KJV) the darkness will not be obscured from you, and the night will be lit up like the day: such as his darkness, so is his light: *[All this is when the soul, after having been passively suffering, if one can make use of this term, becomes passively operative.]* The darkness of the exterior works will (of the active life) be lit up like the day (of the contemplative life): its darkness will be the same as its light.

Finally there is the true active and contemplative life, not separated, as some think; but joined at the same time: because the active life of this person also contemplative; his works exterior, interior; the corporeal, spiritual; and the temporal, eternal. (Rule of Perfection, Part 3, Chapter 7)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

37. By pleasing oneself in God, one becomes consistent with God, and our will is transformed into that of the divine Majesty by the complaisance that it takes. (On the Love of God, Book 8, Chapter 1)

38. See Non-Desire, Number 34.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

39. The Wife of God, having reached his divine unity of its depths, is henceforth wholly transformed into God, not by nature, for that cannot be; but by grace, and by the effect of abundance of a vigorous love, which is generously active at one time, and nakedly and simply passive at another. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order, Chapter 14)

40. This so happy soul lives from the life of God, and God lives in it like in himself, (if one must speak thus,) without any resistance from the creature; for it is like what has never been, at least if it is not deceptive, opposing in something its first duty: as in effect it could well live closer, or further from itself. (Spirit of the Carmelite Order, Chapter 22)

41. See Consistency, Number 39.

42. See Naked (Blind) Faith, Number 44.

43. It is the divine and ineffably delicious fire, run out into the earth of man, I mean, into his spirit, to which all the soul being converted, one must believe that the whole man is most divine, as much as it is possible according to the present state. In effect its deformity is so excellent that even the Angels are shocked by it, because of what is interposed in this one the part of man, which is the very free application of his free will, to love God his divine object tireless and at loss of breath, toward whom love made him run and sometimes fly; and finally he attains his Object by dint of running after him, sometimes to the scent of his perfumes, sometimes and much more often in deaths and dismissal of his sentient presence, and reached the inseparable union with him.

The soul is already so closely and so inseparable united to him, that it has some sort of communion with all the perfections, in all its deity. For it is full of God according to the present capacity of his vessel, which can hold no more in its present state. The deformity is already so big and so high in the creature that God already greatly delights in it by the enjoyment of its beauty. (Mystic Cabinet, Part 1, Chapter 3)

44. One must know that the creature in this state is still very distance from its consummation, while it is capable of receiving some thing in the divine light, either for simple speculation, or for the taste, or for the ecstasy; which are very different things. For its consummation must and can be only the goal and the success of all these mystic means. In a way that if the subject has been found to be strong, this whole order of average Mystic has had its success, by an abundance of effects, so prodigious, so mystical and so laborious, that the only souvenir of it is very pleasant to the true and lost Mystic. But what remains of this to the soul, lost in God its Object, is something else completely: and that is what ravishes it imperceptibly, and in what its very simple and ineffable enjoyment is increased and augmented more and more. Happiness that it possesses in its ineffable, very simple and very unique repose, which makes it experience that one can neither *[All being achieved from the part of the creature and not from the part of God.]* go nor pass beyond. (Mystic Cabinet, Part 1, Chapter 4)

45. God sovereignly delights to flood the whole soul with his delights, to unite it to self completely different than ever in union of unity. In which one can say that the soul is God in God himself, not by nature, but in love and by love: all the more because it has and possesses what he possesses, from a wholly different vastness, width and depth, that it was not doing in the simple and profound unions of its previous action. For this is union beyond the union, in the most essential unity of itself, as one could say, that the unity of the soul and of the body one self of two parts, united and conjoined by one tie and one inseparable love I believe that I am expressing ingenuously by this similarity, as much as it is possible, this profound and most essential deification of the soul, already acquired in this first degree; in which it is so fully spilling over the delicious and effectual actions of God, as much outside as in, that it neither looks like nor feels any thing but this in this itself. From that comes that without its fire and without its action, it [*By the Weight of love.*] sinks in and is engulfed more and more within this overwhelming bottom. –

In this degree and in this divine track, the soul delights, contemplates and rests, either in depth of enjoyment, or in depth of simple sights; which is a degree much beyond this one, and beyond several others which are between the one and the other, to have the soul reach the last and supreme point of consummation starting here, I say, and forever it is fruition of all this, in the objective enjoyment of its sole Object, without time, without eternity, without admiration; and possessing thus its objective good in the supreme most essential fullness of itself, it goes plunging and dilating there inside, neither more nor less than a small drop of water thrown in the sea is lost and annihilated to itself, being incorporated into this elementary body, where it is preserved, completely lost to itself forever, and without ever having been able to go outside as such, or as it was in distinction. I do not mean that here, nor even in the supreme consummation of the spirit comes to the last degree of the consumed depths, the created essence of the soul does not remain in it, to simply subsist and act with these ordinary functions. But it is lost to its overly sensitive and active appetite, through which it desired supremely and impatiently to return to its sovereign and eternal principle and its only and objective good, to never come out alive; I understand without ever having long to go out to return to its active appetite. It knows very well that there is an infinite distance between desire and communal possession, which consists in the most profound unions; and the very perfect and whole possession of the objective good possessed in itself, in the repletion of the simple surpasses, where the soul having arrived operates in an inconceivable manner, not by itself, but by the very simple action of God who acts upon it, draws it, vanishes it outside of itself and all the created, in the uncreated chasm, from depth into depth, and from fullness into fullness. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 5)

46. This state is nothing other, than the very simple transfusion of all the created into the uncreated, which created dilating itself through the succession of time within more and more, up to the last point of consummation, is found entirely lost forever in these chasms of depth. Then it finds itself simple and love; I say, that it feels and sees itself from a very simple view, simple in the very simple unity in the divine Essence.

There being fixed and established, it makes its identity form its same vigorous, simple and original foundation; this is made and is contained in the eminence of a double fecundity, made single in unity with the simple vigorous foundation. – For the simple foundation of the simple created is dilated and lost at the same time totally within the chasm of its original foundation, which is God, going to this effect and sinking within from chasm into chasm, until it has arrived, as we said, at the last point of sameness and possible identity, except for the distinction and the difference which always between the uncreated being and the created one. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 9)

47. It is no longer possible for the soul thus consumed to divert itself from this very simple fruition by intention and will; all the more because its forces are entirely consumed, to never have opposing appetites. I say of will and of intention; because the life that one lives here, is eternal, simple and most essential, in repose and fruition of the divine Essence. For the soul in its consummation is totally refuse and lost in this divine Essence with all the blessed spirits, which have been lovingly lost by their lovers, perpetual and vary vigorous immersion. In which having been totally surpassed, and nothing being found more than them, this intimate union makes it so that there is no longer anything but an infinitely simple, loving and kindly essence and substance, from which and into which they live everything of the same life and pleasure as itself.

For the rest all who live eternally in the Father, live in the same way eternally in the Son: and all who live in the Son and in the Father, live the same in the Holy Spirit; who embraces and ravishes in self and through self all fecundity, and [*Participate in the intercourse of the very holy Trinity.*] us with it, in the whole expanse of this most essential Essence, from which the People go out incessantly to their beatific action, and us with them, in re-entering incessantly with us into their ineffable and infinite repose. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 6)

48. I no longer want your Wives to spend their time in announcing to you that I languish for your love: for we possess each other in our common enjoyment. We embrace each other very tightly and mutually in the infinite expanse of yourself: where I am, not so much as much in love; but I passed to the same love that you are for yourself. The Wife who experienced this, know if the traits and the charms of your ravishing beauty, and the delights in which your Wives have all melted from joy and from love, in your divine and unique embraces, can be expressed by words as profound and essential as they can be. For the charming view of its object that you are ravishing its subject in itself, (I mean his



Wife) that I am; starting with this same moment he removes from it the words and steals them from it in the impulsive force of its contentment which surpasses all feeling. He removes from it, I say, desire and words, in such a way that it does not want, that it does not dare, and even that it can express nothing of this. (*Soliloquy 6*, Chapter 1)

49. When we have reached our center, which is God, transfused and lost in him by the entire transformation of our will into his, we enjoy from here below the plenitude of the Saints, even in the strongest of our battles and our crosses. This is so marvelous, that God takes a singular pleasure in polishing us more and more with all sorts of exercises. (*The Summary of his Life*, Part 2, Chapter 3, Number 94)

SECTION 64  
DECEIT

SHORT METHOD

But what danger can there be to walk in the unique path, which is Jesus Christ, giving oneself to him, watching him without cease, putting all one's confidence in his grace, and inclined with all our forces to his purest love. (Chapter 23, Number 3)

One cannot be united to God, without passivity and simplicity, and this union being beatitude itself, the path which leads us into this passivity, cannot be evil: on the contrary, it is the best; and there is no risk in walking there. (Chapter 24, Number 11)

CANTICLE

I will be there with all confidence; I will no longer be able to be deceived. (Chapter 1, Verse 6)

You are terrible to the Devil and to sin, like an army lined up for battle. [*The Devil fears these souls.*] (Chapter 6, Verse 3)

The Wife is terrible and redoubtable to the Demons, to sin, to the world, and to pride, like an army lined up and set for battle. (Chapter 6, Verse 9)

AUTHORITIES

ST. DENNIS

1. See Proper Operation, Number 14.

ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

2. Oh Love, who will prevent me from loving you! Even when I might find myself among a camp of soldiers, I could not be prevented by them. If the world, or husbands, could hinder the pure love of God, it would be a weak virtue: but I feel in me that there is nothing, which can defeat this love, for it surmounts all things.

It has been said that she could be deceived by the Devil, she responded; I cannot believe that a love, which is not of self can be deceived. –

One can just as soon say that there is no God, as saying that the pure and clean love of God in some creature may be deceived. (In Her Life, Chapter 19)

3. The soul can no longer be deceived by its proper opponent; but it reduces it to such a great desperation, that it doesn't want to give it any refreshment either bodily or spiritual. (In Her Life, Chapter 26)

ST. TERESA

4. See Non-Desire, Number 16.

THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

5. Shortcomings (Flaws), Number 14.

6. When God visits the soul by means of the good Angel, it is not at all sure, neither if in the dark, nor if hidden that the enemy may not discover something; but when God visits it himself, it is then that the afore mentioned verse is verified.

**(In the dark, but without any danger;)**

Because completely in the dark and hidden from the enemy, it receives the spiritual favors of his divine Majesty. The cause is, because of God is the Sovereign Lord, he dwells substantially in the soul, where the Angel nor the Devil could not reach to hear what happens there, and cannot know the intimate and secret communications which are negotiated there between God and it: For these, because Our Lord makes them by himself, are totally devise and sovereign. –

Which is, when already with liberty of spirit, without the sentient opponent being able to prevent it, nor the Devil through his means able to contradict it, the soul enjoys the flavor and an intimate peace of these goods; because for now the Devil would not dare attack it, all the more because he cannot reach in there nor understand the divine touch in the substance of the soul with that of God through the loving account. No one arrives at this good, if not by intimate purgation, nakedness and a spiritual hiding place for all the creatures: and this is being in the dark. (Dark Night, Book 2, Chapter 23)

7. See Consistence, Number 24.

8. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 29.

9. The other blind man that we said is able to hinder the soul in this type of meditation, is the Devil, who wants that being blind, the soul is also; which in these very lofty solitudes, where one receives the delicate unctions of the Holy Spirit, (of which he is grieved and envious, because the soul escapes his hands, that he can no longer attain, and that he sees that it grows marvelously,) endeavors to put into this nakedness and alienation some flood gates of accounts and darkness of delicate essences, sometimes good. – And in this he distracts it and pulls it easily out of this solitude and meditation. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 3, Section 14)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

10. St. Augustine: See Quietude, Section 1, Number 33.

11. St. Ambrose: See Creation, Number 12.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

12. All this time the Devil is constrained to prowling around in the distance, without being able at all to approach: For if he wanted to approach us from the distance of our gaze, he would be struck down by our same gaze. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 2, Chapter 1, Number 3)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

13. It is not believable that such a large number of Authors have been deceived in matters of prayer, which they usually made frequently, and which was the consolation of their souls. God is too faithful to permit saintly personages, who have breathed only his glory, to be deceived in one thing, which has been the whole conduct and direction of their life, seeing that even some have been canonized by the Church, others have performed so many miracles, that among them there have been some very wise ones, and that all have lived very holy and very exemplary lives. – From this it is easy to understand, what judgment one must awake of them, who without any regard for what is below, decry through their discourse and bad writings this science of the Saints, I mean, the practices and exercises of the Mystic life and hidden in humble souls. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 5, Section 4)

14. One of the most beautiful and noble discourses, that Our Lord has ever done, was that he had with the Samaritan, where among several eminent things which he has maintained, he tells her (John 4:24) that God is spirit, and that as such he looked for worshippers of spirit and of truth; as though insinuating, that he could not be worshipped in truth, if he were not worshipped spiritually, that is to say, in a manner relating to the nature of God, who is all spirit. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 5, Section 5)

15. The Mystic Authors say that this way is unknown to the Evil One, who does not know what happens in such a soul, although he can know by the disposition of the interior man, that something singular is made in it, by the light of grace which originates from it; the presence of which not being able to bear, he is forced to flee and to avoid this soul. –

They say again that the means of knowing if a light comes from God, is to consider if it glitters at the bottom of the soul; because the Evil One cannot deceive this soul, but in causing some sorrow or consolation in the sentient part, and that God alone can enter and flow out into its spirit or supreme part.

These authorities prove that the Devil has no hold on the supreme tip of the spirit, because he cannot know its operations. And the reason is, that the operations of this tip are repose and tranquility, and that this tranquil repose is consent of dark and imperceptible will. –

Moreover if the Devil could have something over this supreme part of the soul, it would be in producing some species or act in it, or preventing its own operation. Now he has neither the one nor the other. He can produce nothing in it, because the thing received takes the form of its subject, like the water lands in a circle in a vessel, which has this figure. Now this summit or tip of the soul can produce or receive only mystic acts, which are quietudes without shapes and without images that the Devil cannot produce: either in self, nor in the others. (Book 3, Treatise 3, Chapter 9, Section 2)

SECTION 65  
VIRTUE. THAT THIS STATE MAY ENCLOSE ALL VIRTUE.

SHORT METHOD

This is the short and sure method of acquiring virtue; because God being the principle of all virtue, it is to possess all virtue to possess God; and the more one nears this possession, the more one has virtue in eminent degree.

Moreover I say that all virtue, which is not given through the inside, is a mask of virtue, and like a garment, which is taken off and hardly lasts. But the virtue communicated by the bottom of the soul, is the essential, genuine and permanent virtue, (Psalms 44:14 Douay or 45:13 KJV) The beauty of the daughter of the King comes from the inside. And of all the souls who practice it more strongly than these ones; although they do not think about virtue in particular.

God, to whom they hold themselves united, has them practice all kinds of them: he endures nothing from them he does not permit them a little pleasure.

What hunger these loving souls not have for suffering? To have many austerities would they not deliver themselves if one let them act according to their desires?

They think only of what can please their Beloved. (Chapter 9, Numbers 1-2)

CANTICLE

These ornaments will be chains in a sign of your perfect submission to all the wishes of the King of glory: but they will be of gold; to point out that acting only by a very purified love, you have only the simple and pure view of the pleasure and of the glory of God in all that you do and suffer for him. They will nevertheless be inlaid with silver; because, however simple and pure may be charity in itself, it must be produced and pointed out on the outside, by the practice of good works and the most excellent virtues.

One must notice, that the divine Master in a goodly amount of places takes particular care to instruct his dear disciple in the sovereign purity of love that he asks for in his Wives, and in the fidelity to neglect nothing which concerns the service of the Beloved, or the assistance of the neighbor. (Chapter 1, Verse 10)

Our bed, I say, is prepared and decorated by the flowers of a thousand virtues. (Chapter 1, Verse 15)

The Mistress says, that her Beloved takes his breakfast in her among the lilies of her purity. He himself eats his fill of her graces and her virtues; he lives on innocence and purity, in order to nourish us. (Chapter 2, Verse 16)

This vapor is composed of the choicest scents of all the virtues. (Chapter 3, Verse 6)

These living thrones of the Most High being full of love, they are also decorated with all the fruits and ornaments of love, which are good works, merits, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the practice of the most pure and solid virtues. (Chapter 3, Verse 10)

Come, says he again, from the summit of the highest mountains, which is to say, from the pure practice of the most eminent virtues. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

The scent of your virtues and of your good works, which serve as clothing for you, and which you no longer value, since ownership has been banished from it, flows out everywhere like a very sweet smelling incense. (Chapter 4, Verse 11)

AUTHORITIES

ST. AUGUSTINE

1. If it is true that God is the Sovereign Good of man, and if it is true besides that what one calls living well, is to look for the Sovereign Good, it follows that living well, is nothing other than loving God, and loving him with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our spirit. And this [*Qualities of pure love*] is of importance in preserving for it whole and pure from all corruption this love that we owe him, which is the office of temperance; and to not let it be weakened by any sort of adversity, which is the office of force; to not let him be enslaved to any other thing, which is the office of justice; and finally to keep the eyes open to be perfectly chaste, he must endure nothing in man but himself: all which divides love corrupts it.

Judge all things, and to take care that the appearance of some false good does not seduce us and divert our love from its object, which is the office of prudence. [*Annotation of the Translator: All virtue is found included in the pure love of God.*]

This is [*Annotation: If which the perfection of man consists and which is the necessity of it to arrive at which we aspire to.*] what all virtue and all perfection consists of; and [*Note: the only means of enjoying God, is pure and perfect love.*] the only means that there are to achieve the enjoyment of the truth in all its purity. This is what the two Testaments are in perfect agreement about, and to what both bring us and exhort us in a common voice.

It is then essential that all those who intend to arrive at eternal life, love God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their spirit. Now then life eternal is all the recompense which is promised to us, and merit must precede recompense, and man must be worthy of it before it may be given to him; this could not be otherwise without justice having been harmed; and God is justice itself. That if one asks what is eternal life, he who gives it will take it away from us. Eternal life, he tells us, (John 17:3) is to know the true God and the Christ that he sent. Eternal life is nothing other than the [*One must therefore begin with love; for the knowledge that love produces, is solid and perfect knowledge.*] knowledge of the truth; since Jesus Christ is the truth; and this blessed life is the recompense of the truth.

What we therefore have to do is [*Annotation. God is well known only by those who love him sovereignly.*] to love with all the love of which we are capable to which the knowledge of whom we aspire. (*Morals of the Church*, Chapter 25)

*The Translator adds that it was in the wisdom and justice of God to measure things in such a way that the intelligence of his Scriptures has depended on the disposition with which one would read them.*

#### ST. JOHN CLIMAQUE

2. God having done for me the kindness to reach the second of these virtues, which is perpetual prayer, I found myself one day amidst the Angels, and one among them enlightened me about the things that I desired with ardor to know. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 27, Article 48)

3. Although I may be as if plunged in a very profound ignorance, covered in the darkness of my passions, - I dare nevertheless to undertake to speak of this eminent virtue, which shows us a Heaven on earth, and Angels in mortal bodies. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 1)

4. As the stars make up the beauty of the firmament, so do the virtues make up the beauty of this blessed peace. For I consider it to be nothing other than an interior and spiritual sky, formed in a soul, which no longer considers all the artifices of the Demon, but like games and vain ghosts. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 2)

5. This one then possesses it truly in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of men; who has purified his flesh of all stains of impurity; who has raised his spirit above all created things; who has subdued all his senses to reason; and who keeping his soul always present before God, carries himself incessantly toward this great Object by a supernatural force, and which is above all his own forces. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 3)

6. Others still say that this tranquility is a resurrection of the soul, which precedes that of the body. Others, that it is a perfect knowledge of God, which is inferior only to that of the Angels. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 4)

7. So this virtue which creates all the perfection of the souls in this life, and which nevertheless as if always imperfect, grows always until death, sanctifies the soul in such away, (according to what a great personage who was instructed by his own experience, told me once;) and detaches it so strongly from all affections for the earth, that after having put it in a heavenly port, the virtue raises it as early as this world, by a type of ravishing, up to Heaven, to contemplate there and to see God there. Which made David, himself who had also felt it say that these extraordinary souls are like (Psalms 46:10 Douay or 47:9 KJV) powerful Gods of the earth sovereignly raised above it. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 5)

8. One can say that a soul possesses this perfect tranquility, when the virtues have become as natural to it, as the vices are too voluptuous. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 9)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

9. Love makes men just, simple, pure, rich, virtuous, wise and content; and it softens all bitterness with its sweetness. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Book 3, Chapter 5)

#### ST. TERESA

10. This water of the great goods and favors that Our Lord spreads here in the soul, makes the virtues grow much more without comparison than in the previous prayer: because the soul already goes outside of its misery, and one gives to it a little knowledge of the tastes of glory. This in any opinion makes it grow more, and makes it also approach nearer to true virtue, from where the virtues always proceed, knowledge of God: all the more because his Majesty beings to communicate himself to this soul, and wants it to feel as he is communicating himself to it. The appetite for things here below and for some light tastes begins soon to diminish; for it sees clearly that one cannot for a single instant enjoy this great good, and that all the riches, all the domains, all the honors and all the delights of the earth, are

not capable of giving us a single moment of this felicity, that one sees to be a genuine and solid contentment, with which we feel filled and satiated. –

I prayed Our Lord to increase the scent of these little flowers of the virtues, which were ostensibly beginning to want to go out, and that was for his glory. (*Life*, Chapter 14)

11. Finally, it is here that the virtues are much stronger than in the previous Prayer of Quietude: such that the soul cannot ignore them; because it sees itself wholly different, and does not know how it may begin to make great things with the scent that these flowers cast upon itself. For Our Lord wants them to be opened, so that the soul may know that it has some virtues, although it sees clearly; that it cannot, and could not have acquired them in several years, and that in this small space of time the heavenly Gardener gave them to it. The humility which dwells here in the soul; is much greater and deeper than in the previous degree: for it sees much more evidently that it has done nothing, but consent to his divine Majesty giving it his graces and embrace them with the will. (*Life*, Chapter 17)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

12. He dresses the soul which is on top of the mountain (in his Enigma) in all the Christian and moral virtues.

13. The Wife in the two previous Couplets sang the graces and the splendors of her Friend; through this she proclaims the sublime and the happy state, to which she sees herself raised, the security of this condition, and the riches of gifts and of virtues, with which she sees herself endowed and decorated in the bed of the union of her Husband; for she says, that being united with her Beloved, she has the strong and solid virtues, perfect charity and a fulfilled peace. –

Because of the strength and the acrimony of the lion, she compares the virtues that the soul already possesses in this state to the dens of lions, which are very confident and without fear of all the other animals; because being in awe of the strength and the hardness of the lion which is inside, not only do they not dare enter there, but they do not even dare to come to a stop nearby: in the same way each virtue when the soul already possesses them in perfection, is like a cave and a retreat of the lion, in which the Husband dwells and assists, being strong like a lion, united with the soul in this virtue, and in each of the others; and the same soul united with him in these same Virtues, is like a strong lion; because it receives there the properties of the Friend.

But besides this peace and usual satisfaction, the flowers of virtues of this garden are in the habit of opening up in the soul in such a manner, and of making such a scent and perfume so pleasant, that it sang to it, and it is of the sort, that the soul is full of delights of God. Now I say that the flowers of virtues which are in the soul are accustomed to opening up; because although the soul may be filled with virtues in perfection, it does not always take enjoyment in the act, although as I said one usually enjoys the peace and tranquility that they cause; for we can say, that in the soul in this life they are enclosed in the garden, like flowers in their body. And it is a marvelous thing, to see them all open up by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and to give off an admirable perfume in great variety; for it will come about that the soul sees in itself the flowers of the mountains, about which we have already spoken, which are the abundance, the splendor and the beauty of God, and the lilies of the sky valleys.

Happy is the soul, which in this mortal life deserves to sometimes smell the scent of these divine flowers. –

Each virtue is in itself peaceable, gentle and strong, and consequently creates these three effects in the soul, which possesses [*Although the soul may have these virtues in perfection, it does not always enjoy them indeed.*] it, namely peace, leniency and strength. And all the more because this bed is in bloom, and composed of flowers of virtues, which all have these three qualities, from this is that it is built of peace, and that the soul is pacific, gentle and strong, which are three characteristics, against which no war, nor any Devil, nor any world, nor any flesh can prevail; and these virtues keep the soul so peaceful and so secure, that it seems to it that it is wholly built of peace. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 16)

14. These flowers are the virtues of the soul, as we have already said. The rose bushes are the three powers of the soul, namely; understanding, memory and will, which produces roses and flowers of divine conception, and acts of love of virtues. Amber is the divine Spirit, which lives in the soul, which perfumes the powers and the virtues of the soul, giving it in itself perfumes of divine sweetness. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 32)

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

15. St. Bonaventure: Prudence of the purified spirit, is not only in matters of choice, to prefer divine things, but to only know them alone, and to look at nothing else, as if there were nothing outside of them: this prudence has been singularly practiced by St. Paul, and by St. Francis. – The strength of the purified spirit, is to ignore the passions through impossibility not in defeating them; in not knowing how to get angry, and in desiring nothing: this strength has been principally in Our Lady and in the Virgin Saints and Martyrs, Agnes, Agate, Lucy, Cecile, Catherine. The temperance of the purified spirit is, not to repress the terrestrial desires, but to forget them entirely, which is to say, to not feel them, as is seen in the Contemplative Brother Gilles. – The justice of the purified spirit is to surmount so much

with the divine Spirit, that it keeps with it a perpetual alliance to imitate him. (Sermon 1 of the Luminaries of the Church) (*Enlightenment of the Mystic Sentences of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 12, Section 2)

FATHER JAMES OF JESUS

16. See Consistence, Number 33.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

17. See Shortcoming (Faults), Number 12.
18. See in the same place.

BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

19. The bottom is not penetrated by love, so that it has not totally surpassed the virtues; in such a way that they are all its servants, to do with as it pleases and at its discretion.

Pure love suits only the sovereignly perfect, and no one could practice it incessantly in purity and truth of spirit, if he is not sovereignly virtuous. Finally it is the virtues, which converge immediately on love like on their soul; after which they are no longer one same thing with him. In short love is preserved by the virtues that it has transformed into self. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 5)

20. See Proper Operations, Number 30.

21. Those who have only virtue for principle, subject and theme of exercise, hardly will all, which can be written about it, suffice for them; and they will never pass beyond; because they find this beautiful, excellent and better than all other things. That is why they will never know the true exercises, through the practice of which one becomes spirit, in always losing oneself more and more to oneself; abhorring one's own sentient rest that the common spirituals take in all things. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 14)

22. This path, as well as the other, requires equally the practice of all the virtues. That is why the Mystics say appropriately, that in this path aspiration such as it is with the virtues make up the body; and unifying love very lively and very strong makes up the spirit. This love becomes discrete in proportion to being made divine, in order to be able to sustain all the operations of its divine fire in it, without receiving from it any injury, weakness or hindrance as to its bodily nature on the outside; although it may be true that it is perfectly heart broken inside of itself. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 22)

23. For the rest, one must not think of entering into this state, if one is not firstly resolved to the exercise and to the acquisition of the virtues, and to consume flesh and blood in eternal holocaust of love: this work ask for the whole man. That if one feels imperfect in the boundaries of the virtues that one does not presume to enter here. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 23)

24. See Mysteries, Number 4.

SECTION 66  
UNION. UNITY

SHORT METHOD

The soul has been created one, and simple, like God. One must therefore, in order to reach the end of his creation, quit the multiplicity of our actions, to enter into the simplicity and unity of God (Genesis 1:27) in whose image we have been created. The Spirit (Wisdom 7:22) of God is unique and manifold; and his unity does not hinder his multiplicity. We enter into his unity, when we are united to his Spirit, as if being through this even one same spirit with him; and we are multiplied outwardly in what concerns his wishes without leaving the unity. (Chapter 21, Number 4)

David said (Psalms 72:28 Douay or 73:28 KJV) that it was good for him to attach himself to God, and to put all his hope in him. What is this attachment? It is the beginning of union.

The union begins, continues, is achieved and is consummated. The beginning of the union is a yearning for God. When the soul is turned inside of itself in the manner, which has been told, it is in principal yearning, it has a strong inclination toward the union; this inclination is the beginning. Next it clings, which happens when it approaches nearer to God; then it is united to him: and next it becomes one, which is to become one same spirit with him: and it is then that this spirit gone forth from God returns into its goal. (Chapter 21, Numbers 7-8)

To unite two things as opposed as are the purity of God and the impurity of the creature; the simplicity of God and the multiplicity of man, God must operate singularly. For this can never be done through the effort of the creature, since two things cannot be united unless they have a relationship and a similarity between them. (Chapter 24, Number 2)

The soul arrives at the divine union only by the repose of its will; and it cannot be united to God, unless it is in a central repose. (Chapter 24, Number 3)

This posed, I say that in order that man may be united to his God, it is necessary that Wisdom, accompanied by divine Justice, like a merciless and devouring fire, remove from the soul all that has which is of property and worldly. (Chapter 24, Number 6)

God therefore purifies this soul so much of all proper, distinct, perceived and multiplied operations, which are a very great dissimilarity, that finally, he makes it little by little conform, and then uniform with him. (Chapter 24, Number 8)

No one ignores that the Sovereign Good is God; that the essential beatitude consists of the union to God; that the Saints are more or less great, depending on whether this union is more or less perfect; and that this union cannot be made in the soul through any private activity, since God only communicates himself to the soul as much as his passive capacity is great, noble and extensive. One cannot be united to God without passivity and simplicity: and this union being beatitude itself, the path, which guides us to this passivity, cannot be bad. (Chapter 24, Number 11)

One says that one need not put any of oneself in this I agree. But I say also, that no creature could ever put itself in this; since no creature in the world [*All this has been proven. See Acts, Proper Operations.*] could be united to God by all its proper efforts, and since God unites himself to it.

If one cannot be united to God by oneself, it is like crying out against a chimera, to cry out against those who put themselves in it. (Chapter 24, Number 13)

CANTICLE

This kiss that the soul asks from its God, is the essential union, or the real, durable and permanent possession of his divine object. It is the spiritual marriage.

To make this understood, it is necessary to explain the difference that there is between the union of powers and the essential union.

The one and the other are either fleeting and only for several moments, or permanent and durable.

The union of the powers is this one, through which God unites himself to the soul very superficially: is rather touching it than uniting it.

It is however united to the Trinity of the People, according to the different effects which are appropriate to them: but always as if to the distinct People, and through mediate operation; the operation here serving as means and as ends, in which the soul rests in this union that it feels, not believing that it is necessary to go further.

This union is made in order in each of the powers of the soul; and it notices sometimes one or two among them, according to the design of God; and other times all three together. This is what applies the souls to the holy Trinity as if to the distinct People.

When the union is in the sole understanding, this is the union of pure knowledge; and it is attributed to the Word, as a distinct Person.

When the union is in the memory, which happens through absorption of the soul into God, and a profound neglect of the creatures; it is attributed to the Father, as a distinct Person.



And when it makes itself felt in the sole will, through a loving enjoyment, without a view or distinct knowledge, it is the union of love, attributed to the Holy Spirit, as a distinct Person: and this one is the most perfect of them all, because it approaches the essential union more than any other; and it is principally through it that the souls arrives there.

All these unions are divine embraces; but this is not yet the kiss on the mouth.

There are two sorts of these unions: the one fleeting, which lasts only a short time; and the other permanent, which is sustained by a continual presence of God, and by a gentle and tranquil love which subsists among all things.

There is in few words what is the union of the powers, which is a union of engagement, and which certainly has the affection of the heart, the caresses, and the reciprocal presents, like fiancés; but which does not have the perfect enjoyment of the object.

The essential union, and the kiss of the mouth, is the spiritual marriage, where there is union from essence to essence, and communication of substance: where God takes the soul for his Wife and unites himself to her; neither personally, nor by some act or means; but immediately, reducing all to unity, and possessing her in his unity itself.

Then it is the kiss of the mouth, and the real and perfect possession. It is an enjoyment, which is neither sterile nor fruitless; since it stretches itself out to nothing less than to the communication of the Word of God to the soul. –

There are people who say, that this union can only come about in the other life: but I maintain that for some it can come about in this one, with this difference that in this life one possess without seeing, and in the other, one sees what one possesses.

One can still resolve the difficulty of some spiritual people, who do not want that the soul having arrived in God, (which is the state of essential union,) speaks of Jesus Christ and of his interior states, saying that for such a soul this state has passed. I agree with them that the union to Jesus Christ proceeded by a long time the essential union; since the union to Jesus Christ as a divine Person, is experienced in the union of the powers; and that the union to Jesus-Christ man-God, is the first of all, and that it was made since the beginning of enlightening life: but as for what concerns the communication of the Word to the soul, I say that this soul has arrived in God alone, and that it is established there through the essential union and through the spiritual marriage, before this divine communication was made to it: as the fruits and the products of marriage are made only after the marriage has been consummated. This is more real than one can say.

And as God possesses here the whole soul without interruption, this is what makes the difference of the union to God himself with the other unions; in that in the unions with created beings, the object can only be possessed for several moments, because the creatures are outside of us: But the enjoyment of God is permanent and durable; because it is inside of ourselves; and because God being our final goal, the soul can without cease flow out into him as if in his limit and his center, and be mixed and transformed there. –

One must again observe that God gave us, in creating us, a share of his being, ready to be reunited to him; and at the same time an inclination toward this reunion. He gave something similar to the human body with respect to man in the state of innocence, pulling it from man himself in order to give him this yearning for the union, as if for his origin: But this being between very material body this union can be only material and extremely limited, since it is made between solid and impenetrable bodies. To better understand this, one can make use of the comparison of a metal, that one wants to join to another of a different type: but although one melts them to unite them together, they cannot be perfectly alloyed; because they are of dissimilar natures. This succeeds better in the mixing of a metal with another of the same nature. Or indeed it is like water poured out into different water, which can be so well mixed with the other, that one cannot notice any distinction. So the soul being of a wholly spiritual nature, it is very suited to being united, mixed and transformed into its God.

One can be united without being mixed. That is the union of the powers. But the mixture is the essential union; and this union is completely whole, being made from the all into the all.

There is only God to whom the soul may be united in this manner; because it has been created with a nature to be able to be mixed with its God; and it is this mixture that St. Paul calls (II Corinthians 3:18) transformation, and Jesus Christ, (John 17:11, 21-23) unity, sameness and consummation.

Now this comes about when the soul loses its own consistency in order to subsist only in God: which must be understood mystically, through the loss of all ownership, and through a loving and perfect flowing of the soul into God. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

The soul will be admitted to the divine union through the departure from itself, through the continual renouncement of all personal interest. (Chapter 1, Verse 7)

This persuades him that the fortunate moment of the consummation of the marriage is near, and that the permanent union is going to be formed. (Chapter 3, Verse 4)

One must climb higher and pass beyond all things to enter with me in the womb of my Father, and rest yourself there without surroundings and through the loss of all means; the immediate and central union being made only above all the created. (Chapter 4, Verse 8)

As soon as the soul is entirely unadopted, it is wholly disposed to be received in the bridal bed of the Husband, where it is not earlier introduced, that tasting the sacred and chaste delights of the kiss of the mouth, that it had first desired and that it possesses at present through the essential union, by which it was just gratified, it cannot help but

express its contentment with these words: I am everything to my Beloved, and my Beloved is everything to me. (Chapter 6, Verse 2)

It is this mixing which deifies (to speak in this way,) the actions of this creature, arrived at such a high and sublime state as this one, because they start from a wholly divine principle, because of the unity, which was just formed between God and this soul melted and flowing out in him. –

It is then (after the spiritual marriage) that this admirable mixture of the creature with its Creator who confines them in unity, to speak in this way, is made, although in an infinite disproportion, such as that of a tiny drop of water with the sea. (Chapter 6, Verse 4)

One must notice that of some praises that the Husband had given up to here to his Wife, he had not yet said, (until she had been entirely flowed out into his divine unity,) that she was unique and perfect because these qualities are found only in God. (Chapter 6, Verse 8)

All, which is said about this ineffable union, goes well with all the essential differences between the Creator and the Creature, although with a perfect unity of love and of mystic flow into God alone. (Chapter 7, Verse 11)

The Wife has been in great silence, because it was necessary to confine the soul to this simplicity and the unity of God alone: now that it is entirely consummated in this unity, he wants to give it this admirable agreement, which is the fruit of the consummated state of the soul, to know, (the agreement) of the multiplicity and of the unity, without the multiplicity hindering the unity, nor the unity the multiplicity. (Chapter 8, Verse 13)

## AUTHORITIES

1. See Conversion, Number 2.

2. See Simplicity, Number 2.

3. See Proper Operations, Number 1.

4. See Proper Operations, Number 2.

5. See Simplicity, Number 3.

6. It is also true to say that one could not explain then nor know what are the unions of the heavenly virtues, worthy of them and appropriate to their nature, either that one must name them infusions or the receptions of the more than unknown and more than very clear goodness: which unions are and are found solely among the Angels, who beyond the Angelic understanding have been honored and judged worthy by them. Men gifted with a divine spirit. (See Proper Operations, Number 3 and Divine Names, Chapter 1)

7. All the same, for God being one, and distributing this one to all parts and totality, to the whole one and multitude, he remains nevertheless always one and of the same kind in a most essential way, being neither a part of several, nor a one whole collected from several parts. And setting out he is neither one, nor does he partake of the one, and does not have the one but quote far from all this, *[All that St. Dennis says are divine.]* he is one, beyond one, one in the beings, indivisible multitude, who cannot be filled, and nevertheless full abounding beyond, who produces, who perfects, who contains all one and multitude. Plus by this force and virtue that he has to deify, which proceeds from him, *[This refers to this passage; I said you are Gods. Psalms 81:6 Douay (or KJV 82:6), John 10:34]* several Gods being made, as much as each is capable of the divine similarity there is this seems, and therefore one speaks of the sort, a division and multiplication of a sole God: and always this first God, this sur-eminent God sur-essential God is not less a sole God, who cannot be divided in things which can be shared, united in himself, neither mixed nor multiplied in several. He who, my master and I together, we have had as a guide and director to the light given by God, the personage to the truth most profound in the knowledge of divine things, and who has been the light of the world, having admirably well conceived and considered what we say, speaks in that way like through divine enthusiasm, in one of his sacred Epistles. For (I Corinthians 8:5-6) if there are, he says, several called God, either in heaven or on earth, (as truly there are several Gods and several Lords,) still we have only one God, who is the Father, from whom are all things and us in him; and one Lord, who is Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and us through him. For of all the things, which belong to God, the unions dominate and precede the distinctions, and the same divine things *[It must be the same way with spiritual things.]* are not less united after even the distinction, which is in them united and singular, and never goes forth outside of the unity. (Divine Names, Chapter 2)

8. The Good, which is beyond all light --, includes in self, surmounts and has through anticipation all the force and virtue of that which has the power to enlighten, like the first principle of the light and of all which is luminous, which

gathers and collects in one all intellectual and rational things, and makes them united, squeezed and pressed together. (Presence of God, Number 1 & Quietude, Section 1, Number 1)

For just as the property of ignorance is, to divide and to separate the spirits which are in error, in the same way the property of the intellectual light is, to collect and to reunite by its presence the things that it illuminates, and to perfect them and to convert them into true beings, by gathering up their views which have been scattered and lost in several objects, or to say it better their distracted and vagabond imaginations, to a single true, pure and uniform knowledge, filling them with its light which is one and which has the power to make one those to whom it is communicated. (Divine Names, Chapter 4)

9. Through love, either divine, or angelic, or intellectual, or if it can be said, animal or natural, we understand a certain virtue which has the force to unite and to temper things with each other, which puts superior things in the care and in the providence of inferiors, the equal ones to be kept up by a mutual binding, and the inferior ones from down low where they are, to be turned and converted toward the superior things. (Divine Names, Extract from the Hymns of St. Hierothee.)

10. One must know that there are two powers and faculties in our understanding, one which serves to understand, by which it sees and contemplates the intelligible and spiritual things; the other is a certain union which surpasses the nature of the understand, by which it is united to what is beyond it. According to this one from which one needs to consider divine matters, not in the way that we consider ours; but in going forth entirely outside of ourselves, and being made up wholly entirely to God. For it is better that we are of God than of ourselves, all the more because through these means the divine gifts and graces are communicated to those who are with God. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 7)

11. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 2.

12. We must therefore contemplate a certain unique and simple nature of the union of peace, which unites all things and conjoins them firstly in self, then to itself, and after with each other, which maintains them and preserves them all in good temperament with each other, remaining nevertheless pure without mixture and without confusion; through which, I say, the divine Spirits being united to their own notions and understandings, are by the same means conjoined to the understood objects, and from there climb afterwards to the unknown union of things which are raised beyond the understanding. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 11)

13. Through this union the rational souls coming to unite all their reasonings, which are extremely diverse, and gathering them all to an intellectual purity, climb in their own way, orderly and methodically, by forming a thought purified of all matter, and without any composition of parts, and raise themselves to this union which is beyond thought.

—  
For this peace [*He talks everywhere of the effects of the peace of the soul.*] wholly and universally passes and penetrates into all things, through the very pure and very simple presence of its virtue and its unitive force, joining together the extremities with each other. —

And still this divine peace does not allow anything to remain undivided, showing all things into the one, and passing through all, and nevertheless never leaving its state, which stays always the same. For it leaves and makes its way toward all things, and it gives and distributes itself to all things, as much as it is good and convenient to each: and still it is full and flowing out [*Overflowing, plenitude, fertility of the divine peace (See the Explanation of the Canticle 4:11-16, 6:2-3, 7:1, 8:5, 8:11-12)*] beyond, by the redundancy of its fertile peace; and by the sur-eminent excellence of its union, it remains more than wholly united to its also wholly entire self. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 11)

14. Therefore must we ourselves being converted from the multitude of several objects to the one, through the force and through the virtue of divine unity, celebrate in a singular fashion the Deity all and one, the same author of all things, who is before all which is one. (*Divine Names*, Chapter 13)

15. See Naked Faith, Number 3.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

16. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 6.

17. What is pride looking for, if not the highest point of [*Annotation: Through which one reaches what pride is looking for.*] power? Now then all power is confined to without pain doing what one wants; and it is what [*He who no longer wants the will of God, to find that all its wishes are always and for all time achieved.*] the soul will only reach when it is perfectly submissive to God, when it depends only on him, when charity without measure holding it united to this all powerful God who reigns sovereignty over all things, making it no longer anything but one same spirit with him. (*On the True Religion*, Chapter 52)

18. See Transformation, Number 3.

19. How do we hold on to the truth? It is through sanctification, the effect of which is to embrace us [*Annotation: One can be united to God only through charity.*] in a charity which penetrates all the powers of our soul: For this charity is the only link by which we can be united to God; it is also charity which makes us conformable to God and not to the world; and it is through it that this word of St. Paul is achieved in us (Romans 8:29); God predestined us to be conformed to the image of his Son. Charity is therefore what conforms us to God.

No creature could unite us to the truth, in separating us from all which is subject to vanity and to change. For how could that which is itself among these sorts of things, separate us from them, and unite us to the truth? (*On the Morals of the Church*, Chapter 13)

20. We have seen that St. Paul (Romans 8:35) wants us to be so much united to God through a complete dependencies on his wishes, that nothing can separate us from him. But since the Prophet has us understand the same thing when he says: (Psalms 72:28 Douay or 73:28 KJV) My good is in keeping myself united to God; This single word of David, keep oneself united to God, does it not include, in a manner as precise as it is short, all that St. Paul says throughout this happy union, which is the effect of charity on us? And what St. Paul says a little bit earlier, (Romans 8:28) that all turns to good for those who love God; does it not refer to what David says, that his good is in being united to him? So this St. Prophet makes us see in a single sentence, which consists of only two words, and the strength of charity, and the fruit that we gather from it. (*On the Morals of the Church*, Chapter 16)

21. Sovereign life is happy, which is to say, that where this truth resides, which makes us undoubtedly happy, when we have come to contemplate it in all its splendor, and when we are infinitely united to it, from which we would not know how to step aside without throwing ourselves in an abyss of errors, of miseries and of sorrows. (*On the Morals of the Church*, Chapter 19)

#### ST. JOHN CLIMAQUE

22. Prayer is nothing other than neglecting the visible and invisible world. Lets us say to God with all our heart through the mouth of the Prophet-King: (Psalms 72:25 Douay or 73:25 KJV) What is there in Heaven that I desire? Nothing but you, Lord. What is there on earth that I love and that I cherish? Nothing but you, Lord. Nothing but to be so strongly united to you through prayer, that I can be separated from you. Some desire treasures, others glory, others greats possessions and wealth. But as for me, I wish only to be inseparably united to you, and it is for you alone that I hope and from you that I await the perfect tranquility of my soul. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 28, Article 29)

23. I believe that it is one of the greatest proofs that one has arrived at the blessed peace of the soul, to be able to say truly with David: When my enemy distances himself from me, I do not notice. And I do not know how he comes, nor why he comes, nor how he retires; because I am insensitive to all these things, being perfectly and inseparably united to God with all the powers of my soul. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 10)

24. He for whom God performs this kindness of putting him in such a sublime state, is, starting here, although still clothed in mortal flesh, the living temple of God, who conducts him and governs him always in all his actions, his words and his thoughts: who by the interior light with which enlighten up his soul, makes him hear the voice of his divine will, and raising him above all the instructions of men, makes him say with David (Psalms 41:3 Douay or 42:2 KJV) Lord when am I going to enjoy the blessed sight of your glory? (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 11)

25. What more will I say? He who possesses this inconceivable happiness, (Galatians 2:20) no longer lives in himself: but it is Jesus Christ alone who lives in him, according to the words of this great Apostle, who had, (II Timothy 4:7) so righteously and so generously fought, and who had finished his course and kept the sacred faith of Jesus Christ. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 29, Article 12)

#### HENRY SUSO

26. See Operations of God, Number 1.

27. This man is so much united to God, that God himself becomes his estate. (*Dialogue on Truth*, Chapter 10)

#### THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

28. He who finds all in the sovereign unity, and who brings all to this unity, preserves forever his heart immobile and rests in peace in the womb of God. Oh Truth-God, make me one same thing with you, in binding me to you by eternal charity. (Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 2)

29. See Prayer, Section 3, Number 3.

30. As one acquires interior peace, by desiring nothing outside; so by leaving oneself interiorly, one unites oneself to God in the bottom of the heart. (Book 3, Chapter 56, Section 1)

#### HARPHIUS

31. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 1.

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

32. This holy soul had such a great union with God, its free will was so much bound with him, that it felt in it neither resistance nor choice. It said; If I eat or if I drink, if I walk or if I come to a stop, if I speak or if I am silent, if I sleep or if I stay awake, if I see, if I hear, or if I think, if I am at the Church, at home, or in the square, if I am well or sick; at any hour and at any moment, I want everything to be in God and for God: I would like to not be able, nor want, nor do, nor think, nor speak anything else, if not the will of God; and I would like that the part which would contradict him be made into powder and cast into the wind. (In Her Life, Chapter 28)

33. Whoever would taste of the repose of the union to the will of God, it would seem to him as early as this present life that he is already in paradise. (In Her Life, Chapter 31)

34. See Communications, Section 2, Number 3.

35. Oh Love! You are called love until the love that God poured into the heart of man is totally consumed: for this man remains so inebriated and plunged into him, that he no longer knows what love is; because then love becomes spirit, and unites itself with the spirit of man; which makes man become spiritual: and as the spirit is invisible and in feeling, and cannot fall under the powers of the soul, man remains defeated and surmounted, in such a way that he no longer knows where he is, nor where he must come to a stop, nor where he must go. But through this intimate and secret union made in spirit with God, there remains in the soul such a sweet and delicious impression, with a satisfaction which has so much force and firmness, that there is no martyr who can defeat it; and the soul is filled with such an ardent zeal, that if man had a thousand lives, he would lay them all out to satisfy this intimate impression, which is so strong, that hell cannot trouble it. (Dialogue on Truth, Book 3, Chapter 11)

#### ST. TERESA

36. This method prayer is, in my opinion, a very manifest union of all the soul with God, except that it seems that his Majesty wants to give license to the powers, to understand and enjoy the marvels that it performs then. It happens sometimes, and even very often, that the will being united, one knows that this power is limited and bound, and that it is joyful. I say, that one knows that the will alone is in a great quietude, and that on the other hand memory and understanding are so free, that they can handle affairs and attend to works of charity. Or even that this seems to be the same as what I said about the prayer of quietude, nevertheless it is different in part, because in this one, the soul would not want to be moved, enjoying this holy idleness of Mary; but in this prayer it can still perform the functions of Martha. (Life, Chapter 17)

37. What I claim to explain, is what the soul feels when it is in this divine union. As for the union, one knows very well that it is when out of two divided things, one is made. (Life, Chapter 18)

38. There is this difference between this prayer and that where the soul is whole with God, that in the latter the soul does not swallow this divine meat, but it finds it in self, without knowing how Our Lord put it in there. It seems in the former, that he wants the soul to work a bit, although it may be with so much repose, that it is almost not felt. What torments it, is the understanding, or the imagination: but this does not happen when there is the union of the three powers, he who created them suspends them all. For through the enjoyment that he gives to them, he keeps them all occupied, without them knowing how, and without them understanding it; the soul feeling in self, this prayer, which is a great and tranquil satisfaction with the will, without yet being able to discern what it is in particular. (Way of Perfection, Chapter 31)

39. It is certainly true that this soul does not even find itself awaken in order to love; but oh happy slumber! Oh happy and desirable drunkenness, which makes the Husband compensate for what the soul cannot do, which is to give a marvelous order that all the powers being dead or asleep, love remains alive, and that, without understanding how it

operates, his Majesty orders the soul to perform so marvelous, that it becomes one thing with the same Lord of love, who is God, through an eminent purity; because there is nothing which prevents it, neither sense, nor understanding, nor memory: will alone understands it. (*Conceptions of the Love of God*, Chapter 6)

40. But one can former this doubt, namely, if the soul is so absorbed and so outside of self, that it seems, that it can perform nothing through the exercise of its powers, how can it be deserving? On the other hand it seems that it is not possible, that God would do it such a great kindness, so that it loses time, and that during this interval it is doing nothing in being deserving; this is not believable. Oh divine secrets! We have nothing else to do here, but to subdue and captivate our understanding, and to think that it is not at all capable of penetrating the splendors of God. We must remember of the way, in which the virgin Our Lady carried herself, with all the wisdom that she was endowed with, when she questioned the Angel with these words: [*(Luke 1:34-35) How will this come about? For having responded to her; the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the virtue of the Most High will overshadow you.*] she did not pain herself to inquire about anything else; and as she who had a great faith and a singular wisdom, she immediately understood, that these two things intervening, there was nothing more to know, nor any other subject of doubt. (*Conceptions of the Love of God*, Chapter 6)

41. This is not at all like certain Scholars, that God does not lead through this sort of prayer, and who have no beginning, who want to conduct themselves with so much reason in all things, and regulate and measure them according to the capacity of their understanding, that seems to them that with their letters they must understand all the splendors of God. Now then if they had a little of the humility of the Holy Virgin! Oh Madame, one can very well understand through you, what happens between God and the Wife, according to what we read in the Canticles! (*Conceptions of the Love of God*, Chapter 6)

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

42. All the appetites are not equally detrimental, (I speak of the voluntary ones,) and do not embrace the soul in the same fashion. For the natural appetites hinder little, or not at all, the union of the soul with God, when they do not ask for any consent and do not pass the first movements. I call natural appetites and first movements, all that in which rational will has no part, neither before nor after; all the more because it is impossible to remove and mortify them entirely in this life. And they do no harm, to make it so one cannot reach the divine union, although they may not be totally mortified; because it could certainly that they are in the nature, and that still the soul may dwell in its liberty and freedom, as to what is of the rational spirit; all the more because it will happen sometimes that the soul will be in the high union of quietude in the will, and that they dwell actually in the sentient part of man, the superior part which is in prayer having no part of them. But as for the other voluntary appetites, either of mortal sins which are the most serious, or of the venial sins which are lighter, or only of the imperfection which are even less, one must discharge them entirely, and the soul must be purified of all, as small as they may be, if it wants to reach this total union. The reason is, because of this divine union consists, in him the soul keeps it's will in a [*This makes a stable state of union of will.*] total transformation into the will of God, in a manner that in everything and everywhere its movement is the only will of God.

This is why we say, that in this state of two wills one is made from them, that is namely out of mine and that of God; in such a way that the will of God is also the will of the soul. Now if this soul wanted some imperfection, which without doubt displeases God, it would not pass, and would not be transformed into the will of God; since the soul would be wanting what God does not want. From where it appears that the soul, to unite itself to God by love and will, must before hand be voided of all appetites of the will, certainly even the smallest, which is to say that it consents knowingly and voluntarily to no imperfection, and that it has the power and the liberty to resist any as soon as it catches sight of any. I say knowingly; for without noticing, or without understanding, or without it being entirely in its power to do otherwise, it will certainly fall into some imperfections, or into some venial sins, and into the natural appetites that we have spoken about. For it is written, about such sins which are now so much voluntary, that (Proverbs 24:16) the just will fall seven times a day, and he will get back up the same. But the least of the known and voluntary appetites, if one does not surmount them, suffices to prevent this union --. And as for certain habits of voluntary imperfection, that one never totally surmounts, it is true that not only do they prevent the divine union, but also the advancement to perfection. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 1, Chapter 11)

43. It is not our intention to explain at present in particular, which is the union of the understanding, which is that of the will, and also that if the memory, which is the fleeting union, [*Note, please, fleeting union, and stable and permanent union in these powers; there is therefore a fleeting union and a permanent union; in the powers; and a total union which is beyond that of the powers, as I explained it in the Cantic (Chapter 1, Verse 1).*] and which is the stable and permanent union in these powers, and finally which is the total one; because we will deal with it later in its place. --

To understand what is this union about which we want to speak, one must know that God dwells in all souls, be it that of the greatest sinner in the world, and is present there in substance, and this manner of union or of presence, that we can all natural order, is always between God and all the creatures, according to which it preserves them in their

being, so that if they happened to lack it, they would immediately be completely annihilated, and would no longer exist. So when we speak of the union of the soul with God, it will not be of this substantial presence of God, which is always in all the creatures; [*Nothing is explained more clearly, and that is what I wanted to say in the Canticle.*] But of the union and of the transformation of the soul into God through love, which comes about only, when there is semblance of love: and consequently this one will be named union of semblance, as the other is called essential or substantial union; and that one natural, this one super natural, which is when the two wills, namely that of the soul and that of God, are conformed in one, having nothing in one which revolts the other. Consequently when the soul entirely removes from self that which is repugnant and is not conformed to divine will, it will remain transformed into God through love. Which is not to be understood only as that which is repugnant according to the deed, but also according to custom: in a manner that not only voluntary actions of imperfection must be banished, but also the custom. And [*See Short Method, Chapter 24, Numbers 4-6 on the purification of gold.*] all the more because each creature and all its actions and abilities do not arrive at what is God, as for this subject the soul must deprive itself of every creature, of every action and ability of it, namely of its hearing, of its taste and feeling, so that chasing away all which is dissimilar and non conformed to God, it comes to receive the semblance of God, nothing remaining in it, which is not the will of God, and thus is transformed into him. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 5)

44. The soul therefore making room, that is to say removing from self all cloak and all stain of the creature, which comes about by keeping the will perfectly united with that of God, (because to love is to work to strip oneself of all which is not God;) it remains at once cleared and transformed into God: all the more because he communicates to it his super natural being, in such a way that it appears similar to the same God, and seems to have in some sort what God possesses. And such a union comes about when God distributes this sovereign favor to the soul, when all the things of God and of the soul make up one in partaken transformation; and the soul seems more to be God than to be soul: although to the truth its natural being is as distinct from that of God as it was beforehand, although it is transformed; as the window has its being distinct from that of the ray when it is lit up by it.

From this one sees more clearly, that the disposition for this union is not the hearing of the soul, nor the tastes, nor the smell, nor the thinking in God according to its natural manner, nor whatever else it may be; but only purity and love, which is a perfection resignation and total nakedness only for the love of God. And as there is no perfect transformation, if there is not perfect purity; also accordingly purity will be illustration, illumination and the union of the soul with God in the least, or highest degree; although, as I say, it does not come to be wholly perfect [*See Short Method, Chapter 24, Numbers 2-3 and Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 8, Verse 5*] if it is not entirely clear and sound. This will be understood in the same way by another comparison.

There is a much fulfilled image of a very extraordinary excellence, with a very delicate and very subtle enamel; and in the diversity of this enamel there are some of them so marvelous and so fine, that as to their delicacy and perfection one cannot very well discern between them. He who therefore can hardly see clear, will not perceive so much excellence and delicacy; but another who has good sight, will discover better in them perfection: and if someone has still more purified sight, he will notice there more industry and delicacy. Finally the more one sees clearly, one will notice more perfection and excellence; because there is so much to see in this image, that whatever one discovers in it, there remains much more to notice. Also we can say that one's soul carry themselves in the same manner with God in this illustration and transformation. For although to the truth a soul according to its smaller or greater ability, can have arrived at this union, nevertheless all souls do not reach there in the same degree; because it is as it pleases Our Lord to give it to each one: which is in the manner, that the Blessed sees it in Heaven. For some may see it more perfectly, and others less, although all see God, and although all may be content and satisfied; seeing that their capacity is filled according to their greatest and their least merit.

From where it comes that although in this life we may find souls with a repose and a peace equal in their state of perfection, and although each remains satisfied, if this nevertheless is that the one will be able to be raised more highly than the other in this union, and all to remain equally satisfied according to their disposition, and according to the knowledge that they have of God. But the one, which does not arrive at, the purity required for the illustrations and vocations of God, never arrives at true peace and satisfaction, failing to have raised its powers, as is necessary for the simple union. (*Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, Book 2, Chapter 5)

45. The souls begin to enter into this dark night, when God goes pulling them little by little from the state of those who are beginning, [*This here is what is said in Short Method, Chapter 24, Number 9, that meditation is the door and the entrance of the path; the union, the perfection and the consummation of this path.*] which is the state of those who meditate in the spiritual path; and puts thee in that of those who profit, which is already of the contemplatives, so that passing through there they arrive at the state of the perfect ones, which is that of the divine union of the soul with God. (*Dark Night*, Book 1, Chapter 1)

46. See Purification, Number 42.

47. See Proper Operations, Number 17.

48. The eighth degree of love makes the soul embrace and clutch its friend with an indissoluble bond. –

The ninth degree of love makes the soul burn with sweetness. This degree is of the perfect ones, who are already burning sweetly in God; because this sweet and delectable ardor is brought about by the Holy Spirit, on the basis of the union that they have with God. That is why St. Gregory says, that when the Apostles encounter visibly the Holy Spirit, they burned sweetly with love on their insides. One could not speak of the wealth and riches of God, which the soul enjoys in this degree: one would write several books before telling the half of it. (*Dark Night*, Book 1, Chapter 20)

49. This repose and this quietude of this spiritual house, comes to be won by the soul habitually and perfectly, [*as much as the condition of this life may allow it,*] by means of these substantial acts of divine union, that we just said, that it received secretly from the Divinity, and hidden away from the disorder of the Devil, and from senses, and from the passions: where the soul has been purified, calm and made strong, consistent and stable in order to receive with lasting quality the said union which is the divine marriage between the soul and the Son of God. –

The Wife gives to mean the same in the Canticles, saying that after (Canticle 5:7 & 6:1-2) she had evaded those who removed from her coat during the night, and who hurt her, she found him that her soul was looking for. One cannot reach this union without a great purity; and this purity is not acquired without a great nakedness from all things. (*Dark Night*, Book 1, Chapter 24)

50. In this sweet drink of God, of which, as we said, the soul imbibes itself in God with a very great will with much sweetness, the soul delivers itself to God, wanting to be wholly to him, and never have anything in itself which convenient and becoming to such a Majesty, according to the reach of its condition, God causing in it in the said union. The purity and perfection which is required for this; for in transforming the soul into self, he made it wholly his, and emptied from it all that it had which is away from and distanced from God. From it comes that not only according to the will, but also according to the effect it remains wholly given and delivered to God, without saving anything; as God also gave himself freely to it: in a manner so that these two wills stay reciprocally surrendered to each other, content and satisfied between them, in such a way that whatever it may be one lacks nothing from the other with faith and assurance if engagement. (*Canticle between the Wife and the Husband*, Couplet 19)

51. The soul is in this state as if in a scorching furnace and embraced in an especially peaceable union; more glorious and more tender, than the flame of this furnace is more scorching than the communal fire; in such a manner that the soul feeling that this lively flame communicated vividly to it all the wealth, because this divine love carries them with itself, the soul say:

Oh lively flame, Oh holy ardor  
Which by this gentle wound  
Pierces the center of my heart:

Wanting to say, oh embraced love. (See Purification, Number 47 and *Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 1. Verse 3)

52. One must be necessity have broken the first two canvases in order to arrive at this possession of God through union of love where all the things of the world are renounced, the appetites and the passions mortified; and the operations of the soul made divine; which has been broken by the meeting with this flame when it was harsh and arduous. For the soul in spiritual purgation succeeds in breaking these two canvases, and to be united as it is here, and there only remains to break the third, of the sentient life. That is why it speaks in the singular, and does not say the canvases, but the canvas; for there is no longer but that one, which the flame does not jostle rigorously or harshly like it did with the others, but gently and sweetly. And thus the death of [*I believe that this is what is said in the Apocalypse (Revelations) 20:6; that they who have suffered the first death, will suffer nothing in the second.*] such souls is most sweet and most gentle to them, and gentler than it has been to them all their life, all the more because they die with impulsiveness and savory encounters with love, like the swan which sings more melodiously when it approaches death. That is why David said, (Psalms 115:15 Douay or 116:15 KJV) that the death of the just is precious: because there the rivers of the love of the soul are going to enter into the Ocean of loving, and are there so vast and so calm, that they already appear to be seas; there joining the beginning and the end, the first and the last to accompany the just, who leaves and goes into his kingdom, hearing the praises of the extremities of the earth, that is namely the glory of the just, and the soul then feeling itself to be with these glorious meetings on the point of leaving, and of entering into abundance to possess the kingdom perfectly: because it sees itself pure and rich, [*as much as faith and the condition of this life can sympathize,*] and perceives itself disposed to this: for God in this state lets it already see his beauty, entrust it with the gifts and the virtues with which he enriched it, see that in it all becomes love and praise. [*Note: there being no more leaven to ruin the dough.*] (*Lively Flame of Love*, Canticle 1, Verse 6)

53. The blessed soul which had the fortune to get this burn, [*This is divine. It is like he who is on the bottom of the sea; if he could live there, he would judge much better his inexhaustible riches, which one cannot do with all the reasoning: and as he would have infinite space to walk around, he would discover at each step new beauties which*



would charm him.] knows all, tastes all, does everything that it wants to, prospers, and no one has an advantage over it or touches it; for it is that one about which the Apostle says: (I Corinthians 2:15) The spiritual man judges all, and he is judged by no one; And in another place; (I Corinthians 2:10) he searches all things all the way down to the depths of God. Oh great glory of the souls, which deserve to reach this most high fire, which having an infinite force to consume and annihilate you, not consuming you, it consumes you in glory with immensity. Do not be amazed that God leads some souls up to here, seeing that he in certain things is singular in performing prodigious actions. Therefore this burn being so gentle, as we gave to understand here, how much will the one, which is touched by this fire, be caressed. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 1)

54. Oh delicate touch, Word Son of God who through the delicacy of your divine being, penetrates subtly into the substance of my soul, and touching it delicately, you absorb it wholly in divine ways with unheard of sweetness. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 3)

55. God behaves in these ways toward those that he wants to favor and give advantages to, according to the most important amendment; for he lets them be tempted, afflicted, tormented, and purified inwardly and outwardly, up to where one can reach, in order to deify them, giving them the union in his Wisdom, which is the highest of all the states, and purging them firstly in this same Wisdom, depending on whether David marks it, saying, that the Wisdom of the Lord is silver tried by the fire, tested on the earth of our flesh and purged seven times, which is to say very purged. And there is nothing more to stop and declare here, as each of these purging is done in order to reach this divine Wisdom, which is in the state of this mortal life as the silver, which is of such fineness and so purified as it may be, will never be like precious gold, which is reserved for glory.

The soul confesses it here, as if already well satisfied, saying:

**And pays all debts.**

As David did also through these words; How much have you shown me troubles in great number, and bad ones: and turning yourself, you have revived me, and have once more pulled me from the depths of the earth, you have multiplied your magnificence in me, and turning yourself toward me you have consoled me.

(Hearing, Number 22) Such that this soul which was beforehand outside (Esther 4:1-4 & 6:3) at the gates to the palace of God, crying, [*Like Mardochai (Mordecai) in the streets of Susan the risk of his life, clothed in sackcloth, not wanting to receive the garment that the Queen Esther had sent him, and having received neither favor nor recompense for the services that he had rendered to the King, nor for his faithfulness in preserving for him his honor and his life.*] it is paid everything in one day, having him not only enter the palace and remain in the presence of the King, clothed in royal robes, but also crowning it with a diadem, and giving it as if to another Esther, possession of the kingdom of its Husband; because those of this state obtain all that they want, and all debt is paid to them, the enemies of their appetites, being already dead, the ones which wanted to take away their life, and already living in God. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 2, Verse 5)

56. Here one greatly needs the favor of God to explain and proclaim the depth of this Canticle; and he who will read it must pay great attention, because if he has not experience, he will find it extremely obscure, although it is clear and pleasant if one understands it.

The soul in this Canticle thanks intimately its Husband, for the great favors that it has received from the union with him, communicating to it by these means much very lofty and very sublime understanding of itself, with which the powers (Pure Love, Number 23) and the senses of his soul, which before this union were dim and blind, being lit up and inflamed with love, remain illustrated by the warmth of love, in order to correspond with the Beloved, offering this same light and love to he who embraced and hurt them with love, pouring into it such divine gifts. (Justice of God, Number 6) For the true love is the content, when all that he is, and that he is worth and can be worth, and that he has and can have, he employs it in the Friend; and so much the more that it is great and excellent so much the more does he take pleasure in giving it. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3)

57. Oh lamps of luminous fires!

Supposing that lamps have two properties which are [*That is the effect of love in the soul; it is burning and luminous.*] to enlighten and to burn; to understand this verse one must conceive, that God in his unique and simple being, is all the splendors and virtues of these attributes; because he is all powerful, is wise, is good, is merciful, is just, is strong, is loving, and he is the other attributes and virtues that we do not know about him in this life. And being all these things when he is united with the soul, and when it pleases him to make himself manifest to it through a most particular mark, [*God sometimes communicates himself to the soul in distinctly in the unity itself.*] it perceives and knows in him these virtues and these splendors in unique and simple being perfectly and profoundly, depending on whether these sympathies with faith: and as each of these virtues is the same being of God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each of these attributes being God himself, and God being an infinite light and a divine infinite fire, (as has been already said;) from this comes that in accordance with each of these attributes he enlightens and burns like true God.

And so in accordance with these marks that the soul has known of God in unity, the same God is several lamps to the soul; since it has knowledge of each, and since each in its way warms it with love, and all are in one simple being, and all make up *[Unity and multiplicity in the unity, this is a distinct communication in the unity itself. It is that all these lights are enclosed in this divine unity, where all is distinct without distinction, all is one and multiplied without confusion.]* one lamp which is all these lamps; For it lights up and burns in every way; which knowing the soul, this single lamp is several lamps to it, because although it is one, it can be all things, it has alone all the virtues, and gathers all the spirits. And so we can say that God glows and burns in several fashions in one way, because he glows and burns as all powerful, he glows and burns as wise, he glows and burns as good, giving the soul intelligence and love, and manifesting himself in it, in the way that it is capable of it according to them all; for the splendor that this lamp gives it, in so far as it is all powerful, causes in the soul light and warmth of the love of God, in so far as he is all powerful.

These lamps were shown to Moses on Mt. Sinai, where God passing before him, he prostrated himself on the ground, and told some of the splendors that he had seen in him, and loving him in according with the things he had seen, he told about them distinctly with these words; (Exodus 34:6-7) Rules, Lord merciful God. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 1)

58. Oh soul, what, and how excellent, and in how many ways will your light and your contentment be, since you feel that in all and from all (these lamps of directions) he gives you his joy and his love, loving you according to the virtues, attributes and properties? Because he who loves and does good to another according to his condition and his properties, honors and obliges him; the same as your Husband in you, *[It is certain that such a soul finds itself reclothe according to its need of the qualities of God, that he communicates to it secretly, when no necessity obliges to manifest it.]* being all powerful, gives to you and loves you with omnipotence; and being wise, you feel that he loves you with wisdom; being good, you feel that he loves you with holiness, and in this way with the rest. And as he is liberal, you feel also *[O my Lord, you love me without provocation, and I would not love you the same, and I could look for in you something other than you! It is a horror to think about it.]* that he loves you with disinterested liberality, but only to do you good, showing you joyously this face full of blessings, and telling you; I am yours and for you, and am very free to be such as I am in order to give myself to you and to be yours. Who will be able to explain what you feel, O blessed soul, seeing you thus loved and grown with such esteem? We will say that (Canticle 7:2) your stomach which is your stomach, resembles a pile of wheat which covered and surrounded by lilies; because in these grains of the bread of life that you taste, together the lilies of the virtues which surround you recreate you and delight you, all the more because these daughters of the King, who are the virtues, from the scent of their aromatic drugs, which are the knowledge that he gives you, gladdens you wonderfully, and you are so plunged in and so imbued within, that you are also the well of the brisk waters who flow impetuously from Mt. Lebanon, which is God: How you are wonderfully gladdened according to the harmony of your soul, so that he also achieves in you the word of the Psalmist (Psalms 45:5 Douay or 46:4 KJV); the impetuosity of the river gladdens the city of God. O admirable thing that then the soul *[like those who are near a pool which is overflowing, feel the waters of its overflow fall on them; in the same way those who approach these souls feel the effect of their plenitude.]* spills out and discharges divine waters, and they come out of it like from a copious fountain which is looking at eternal life! For although it is true that this communication is light and fire of the lamps of God; this fire is here so gentle, that although this may be an immense flame, it is like waters of life, which *[Perfect satiation which quench the thirst, and removes consequently all perceived desires: because the desire is properly a thirst of the soul, in the way that David felt it at the time when he said (Psalms 42:1-3 Douay or 43:1-3 KJV): As the faltering stag longs for the waters, so does my heart long for you, O living God: and in another place, when he felt his satisfaction, he cries out (Psalms 72:25 Douay or 73:25 KJV): What is there for me to desire in heaven, and what could I want on earth?]* sates and quenches the thirst with the impulsiveness that the spirit desires.

And so, although these are lamps of fire, they are brisk waters of the spirit; like also those which came upon the Apostles, although they were lamps of fire, were also pure and clean waters: for Ezekiel names them in this way when he predicts the coming of the Holy Spirit: (Ezekiel 36:25-26) I will pour over you clean water – and will put my Spirit within you. Therefore although it is fire, it is also water: for it is represented by the fire of the sacrifice that Jeremiah hid. (*II Maccabees 1:20*) which while he was hidden was water and when he went outside to take the sacrifice, it was fire. *[Now after many years, when it pleased God, Neemias, being sent from the king of Persia, did send of the posterity of those priests that had hit it to the fire: but when they told us they found no fire, but thick water; Then commanded he them to draw it up, and to bring it; and when the sacrifices were laid on, Neemias commanded the priests to sprinkle the wood and the things laid thereupon with the water. When this was done, and the time came that the sun shone, which afore was hid in the cloud, there was a great fire kindled, so that every man marveled. (II Maccabees 1:20-22)]* And *[well depicted state of sacrifice]* in this way (Sacrifice, Number 2) the Spirit of God, in so far as it is hidden in the veins of the soul, is the gentle and fresh water which quenches the thirst of the spirit; and in so far as it practices the sacrifice of loving it is of lively flames of fire, which are the lamps of the act of spiritual affection (love), about which the Wife speaks in the Canticle; (Canticle 8:6) His lamps are lamps of fire and of flames; which the soul names in that way, because not only does it taste them as waters of Wisdom in self, but again as fire of love, saying in the act of love: O lamps of fire.

(Transformation, Number 24) All that one can discourse about it [*Note: please, that all that I have just written, is a stable state exempt from vicissitudes.*] is nothing in comparison with what it is. If one notices that the soul is transformed into God, one will in no way understand, as in the truth, that it has become a fountain of brisk, ardent and fervent waters in the fire of love which is God. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 1)

59. These sights, or these displays of glory in God, which are here given to the soul, are already more continual than customary, and more perfect and stable: but in the other life they will be most perfect, and without change for better or for worse, and without any vicissitude or interstice of movement. [*Note, without change for better or worse: which shows that the change does not exit at the bottom but only for more or for less: without any interstice of movement; which means that, although the bottom of the soul may be stable in God, it is not always free to act in accordance with what it feels.*] Then the soul will see clearly, that although it appeared here that God stirred in it, he is still immobile in self, like the fire which is not moved in its sphere. Nevertheless these splendors are invaluable blessings and favors that God gives to the soul, which one names otherwise overshadowing. And these in this state in my opinion are of the greatest and the loftiest, which can be in the process of transformation.

To understand this, one must know that to overshadow means to put in shade, which is as much as protecting and doing favors; for coming to touch the shadow, is a sign that the body which makes it is near in order to favor and defend. That is why it was said to the Virgin, (Luke 1:35) that the virtue of the Most High would overshadow her; because the Holy Spirit had to approach so closely to her, that he had to come upon her. And [*This is divine and of exquisite taste.*] note that each thing has a shadow, and makes it according to its attributes and its shape. If the thing is thick and indistinct, it will make the shade the same; if it is finer and clearer, the shade will be clearer: as one can see with wood and the crystal; the one which is opaque will make an indistinct one, and the other which is transparent will make a clear one. The same is also true for the spiritual things, death is deprival of all things, therefore the shadow of death will be of darkness, which also deprives not in the slightest of all things: thus the Psalmist calls it, saying (Psalms 106:10 Douay or 107:10 KJV) Seated in the darkness and in the shadow of death: if this darkness is corporeal, of corporeal death, if it is spiritual, of spiritual death. So the shadow of life will be light, [*One can see in that, if our life is natural or divine. If our lights are natural, one must conclude that our life is natural; if our lights are divine, let us conclude that our life is divine.*] so divine, divine light; if human, natural light: and so the shadow of beauty will be like another beauty, according to the fashion and property of that of which it is the shadow, and the shadow of force will be like another force, according to its form and condition; the shadow of the wisdom will be another wisdom, or to say it better, will be the same beauty, the same force, the same wisdom in shadow, in which one knows the shape and the property of the thing of which it is the shadow. Presupposing this, what will be, I ask you, the shadow of the Holy Spirit makes over the soul from all the splendors of its virtues and attributes? Being so near it, that he does not touch it so much in the shadow, but also that [*Note, that it remains united; which marks a permanent union. All this is still admirable.*] It remains united with it in the shadow, hearing and savoring the greatness and the properties of God in the shadow of God: that is namely, [*Note: that he always puts taste and knowledge, because light and heat are inseparable from love.*

*It is true that such a soul knows all, and knows nothing. When it is necessary to produce the knowledge on the outside, it sees that it knows all that it never learned from any man, and no man could have even taught it. Outside of there the Master closes the cabinet of his treasures, in such a way that the soul does not understand what it knows, and does not even consider if it knows it, remaining as if the most ignorant one in the world, without being able to answer a word, if the Master does not open the curtain. That if he does not open it, or it cannot say anything, or what it says is so muddled, that it does not understand itself, about the things of which it has spoken and written best. At least this happens to a silly little woman like me, who knowing nothing cannot gauge with the spirit what she must say, nor even arrange the materials for the building, even if she had them all. It is necessary that its divine Master, not only give her these materials, but arranges them for her himself, and has them come out according to their order: in such a way that she knows so clearly, that not only does she have nothing of itself, but even nothing for her, so that all the earth would tell her the contrary so that she would take nothing for herself, and so that she would find herself completely poor among his riches, without nevertheless feeling any poverty or indigence. I believe that it not the same for the great and holy men; because they are the lights of the Church, they must maintain his doctrine with a light concordant with learning: (if this term is good or bad, I do not know) Finally they see and understand what they see and understand, but what shows us or makes understood, without arranging anything; because we are made like a little child who only knows how to copy what is written: that is why the head has no part in what we write. Perhaps it is also that, as there are several dwellings in the Kingdom of the Lord, he keeps us in this one; or perhaps still, so that the pride natural to our sex, steals nothing from God; or for some other reason known to him alone. However what is admirable is that having nothing, one lacks nothing. It is the same with the wisdom that the soul possesses in Jesus Christ, eternal Wisdom, and not outside of him, or distinct from him; which is given to it after having lost all human wisdom, its voids find themselves filled with divine Wisdom, not to enjoy in self, but in God: That is why although one possesses it in that way in God, and the discretion of the spirits, one nevertheless disposes of it only recording to the will of God: For the treasures of the soul in God, are enclosed and hidden in God. It is not the same with gifts received in the proper capacity; the soul perceives them and enjoys them even when they have passed, because there remain for it the thoughts*

and images. It is not the same with these ones, which as for the purity leave no images, but certainly some vestiges: often still because of their extreme purity, they leave no traces. If is, like the Scripture says it seems to me, in some place, (Proverbs 30:19) the path of a ship on the sea, that of a snake on the stones and that of the eagle in the air. The vessel skims the water and leaves some vestiges for a moment, that is to say in the water that it cast and ploughs through actually, and not in that which is already cut through and crossed, on which one no longer sees anything. One only knows the path of the snake on the stones, because it leaves its old skin there: one knows the path of this soul only because of its shed skin: But one does not know the new skin that it has taken, by any sentient evidence, because he has dropped his old robe: so one conjectures that the soul is reclothe in the new-man who is Jesus Christ, because it is stripped of the old-man. As for the pain of the eagle in the air, what vestige remains? None. When it passes, the sound of its wings is the mark of its passage; but when it has passed, one judges its height by the rapidity of its flight, and by the powerlessness that one has to reach it. It is the same way with the state of this soul, or even like what is said in Esdras by the Angel Uriel (II Esdras 4:5 {The Writings or Apocrypha}): Measure the time, weigh the fire, and remember the day which has passed: it is the only knowledge that one can have of these souls. How can one weigh the fire, which has no weight? This is to say, weigh the purity of its love: the less it falls under the feelings, the lighter and disengaged from matter it is; the purer it will be. If our fire still has weight, it is attached to matter and to its subject, which is heavy, and not the fire, which is weightless. If our love, either suffering, or joyful, still has weight, it has not acquired all its purity. One must measure the time, which is to say that of sorrow and grace, and judging; not by what they are then, but by what they have been. And it is also to recall the day, which has passed. The love of God in God no longer has any weight; the day spent in God becomes an eternal moment; the time in God is timeless; and it is there where there is no more time, because all is eternity! I was saying then that the Master closes his secretes and his treasures, as he keeps himself his wife closed in him. These are the seven seals that he alone is worthy of opening them (Apocalypse 5:1 Douay or Revelations 5:1 KJV). It is he who opens and when he opens no one shuts; it is he who shuts, and when he shuts no one opens (Apocalypse 3:7 Douay or Revelations 3:7 KJV): it is he who having the keys of life and death alone can kill and give life. (Wisdom of Solomon 16:13)] in tasting and understanding the property of divine power, in the shadow of the divine omnipotence, and understanding and tasting divine wisdom in the shadow of divine wisdom; in brief, tasting the glory of God in the shadow of glory, which makes one know and understand the property and the manner of the glory of God: all this happens in clear and blazing shadows, since the attributes of God and his virtues are lamps, which, because they are resplendent and blazing, must make in their manner and property clear and blazing shadows, and several in a single essence. O what it will be to see the soul experiencing the virtue of this face Ezekiel saw (Ezekiel 1:13, 15) in that animal of four shapes and faces, and in this wheel of four wheels? Seeing its appearance, which was like lighted coal and like sight of lamps, and seeing the wheel, which is wisdom full of eyes inside and out, which are admirable signs of wisdom; and hearing this sound of their step, which was like sound of a multitude of armies, which signify several things in one (that the soul knows here in a single sound, of a single step of God, which [That is to say, as if taking a walk in his soul, if one can make use of this word, as it is said, that God was taking a walk in the terrestrial paradise, in the garden of delights: this soul is a garden of delights for its Husband, full of flowers and fruits.] passes through it,) in brief tasting of this sound of the fluttering of their wings, which was, in the words of the Prophet, like a sound of several waters, and like the sound of the most high God, through which the impulsiveness of the divine waters is signified, at the waterfall of which the Holy Spirit invests the soul with the flame of love, which enjoys here the glory of God, in the shelter and favor of his shadow: as the Prophet also (Ezekiel 2:1) says that this vision was a semblance of the glory of the Lord. O that this happy soul may be here raised!

O that it may be uplifted, being again in the boundaries of faith. Who will be able to say so? Seeing that it is so abundantly imbued with the waters of these divine splendors, which the eternal Father sprinkles from on high and down low, since these waters spraying the soul, penetrate the body also. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 2)

60. The capacity of these Caves is therefore [It is necessary to measure the fullness of light on the depth of the void, and the satiation in this same union of the vivacity of the desire of this union; for the more one longs for it with vehemence, the more the desire finds itself fulfilled. O you, divine Love, which makes all these things, you well know that you make them. You know and their depth and their reality, and that these blessings are of one nature, that they cannot be imagined by those who do not possess them; and those who possess them can speak of them only by experience, since they can never be imagined. And how would one imagine them, O my Love and my life, since they can fall neither under the senses, nor consequently under the imagination, which receives only what the senses either exterior or interior give it? All which is sensory and distinct can be imagined: but in what way would be imagined that which is non sensory and indistinct, without a face or figure, without color, without taste, without scent, although with all the tastes, the scents and the colors, which is unique in the unity itself, and which can be expressed only by opposing terms, by the voids, the shedding and the deaths, which cannot be depicted nor expressed?

For it is this wisdom about which it is spoken in (Job 28: 21-22). It is, he says, unknown to the birds in the sky, that is to say, to all the thoughts of the spirit and to the spirit itself; it is hidden from all those who are living, that is to say, to the senses and to the imagination, and to the powers themselves in so much as they are living in their own action; Ruin and death said only; We have heard as if from afar the sound of its reputation: it is that this divine Wisdom begins to come into sight as if from afar in the time of ruin and of death. And in what manner? It is that death

and ruin extracting from man his own wisdom, gives him a remote and indistinct taste of another wisdom, which must fill this profound void, which was made from his own wisdom. For one must know that as much as the soul loses its own wisdom, it feels in itself like a profound void of wisdom, and at the same time a hunger for another wisdom which must fill its voids; but it is as if from afar, like a remote noise, similar to that a person who is sleeping hears, when one speaks nearby him: but little by little this noise and this reputation of wisdom approach the soul, and lets itself come into sight and be possessed by that soul which was inflamed by it, lets itself be heard near this soul which heard it so far away. It is not that this divine Wisdom is not nearby the soul on the time of death and ruin; since it is it which brings it about: but it is that the soul is in a state of inactivity; it hardly sees or hears; and if one wakes it, it is only by tormenting it, and through an excess of pain so it has no way of watching this Wisdom charitable such as it is. But when it has brought about a most profound void in the soul, O then does it manifest itself! And it is then that the soul cried out in its rapture, that all wealth has come to it with the wisdom (Wisdom of Solomon 7:11); because it is itself the source of all that is good. It begins by investing the soul next it floods it, submerges it and sinks it into itself.

Now it is easy to see this everywhere that the soul feels before the union an acute, sharp consuming desire, which is diminished and weakened in death by weakness, by impotence and by a type of desperation, and which finally passes into God in the union, and in the experience and the possession of Wisdom, through the union to this divine Wisdom, which is never without accompaniment according to the need of the soul, or of the void, or of the satiation: in the void it causes a biting desire, but aching; and in its fullness it fills this desire of itself, satiates it, transcend it, floods it, submerges it in self.

O if all this could be expressed, who could ever doubt its truth! But after having said so much, one sees that one has said nothing and that one can say nothing about that which is ineffable. O that a quarter of an hour of experience would show well possible and well real, what one sees as false or as imagined! What is one doubting? It is the power or the love of my God? He wants all in order to conform to him according to our ability and he can do all he wants: he loves us with an infinite love, which he marked enough by giving himself, making himself man and dying for us. One cannot doubt the truth of all that, and one doubts the effect and the application of the blood and the evidence of his love. Still he proclaimed it himself (Proverbs 8:31) that his delights are to be with the children of men, when they are simple and small enough to be children among men, and to let him be all other things in them.] deep, all the more because of what they must receive in themselves, namely God, is deep and infinite: and so their capacity will be as infinite, their thirst infinite, their hunger as infinite and deep, their pain and undoing in his manner infinite. Consequently when the soul suffers, although it may not be as harshly as in the other life, nevertheless it seems that it is a vivid image of it: because the soul is of a certain disposition as to receive its fill, the deprivation of which is a very great torment to it, although this pain is of another quality; because it is in the womb of the love of the will, and here love does not ease the pain, since the greater it is, the more it is impatient for the enjoyment of its God, whom it awaits each moment with a most vehement desire. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 3, Section 2)

61. But, my God, since it is certain that when the soul longs for God with a whole truth, it already has what it loves, (as St. Gregory says,) how is it grieved for what it already has? And if in the desire that the Angels have, says St. Peter, (I Peter 1:12) to see the Son of God, there is no pain or anguish, for the reason that they possess him already; it seems that if for the soul, the more it desires God, the more it possesses him, and as the enjoyment of God delights and satiates, the more it must have felt satiation and delight in this desire, as it was more vehement, since it possesses God more, and so by reason it did not have to feel any pain or grief.

In this question one must vote the difference there is, in having God only by grace, and having him also by union. For the one is to reciprocate want for good for the other, and the other is a most particular communication, which difference we can understand from the one that there is between engagement and marriage. For in engagement, there is only an agreement and a wish of two parties, some rings and jewels that the fiancé gives to the fiancée; but (See Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 6, Verse 4) in marriage there is also union and communication between people: in the engagement, although the fiancé sometimes sees the fiancée, and gives her presents. Nevertheless there is no union of people, which is the end of the engagement. The same way when the soul has reach such a purity in self and in its powers, that the will is most purged of other strange tastes and appetites in accordance with the inferior and superior part, and that it has wholly given [Note its consent. I said in many places that God asks this consent of the soul. (See *Short Method*, Chapter 24, Number 7, See also the Explanation of Exodus 19:8 and of St. Luke 1:38)] its consent to God, touching all this, the will of God and that of the being already one in a prompt and free consent; then we say that the soul has come to possess God by grace and engagement, and in conformity of will: In which state of spiritual engagement of the soul with the Word, the Husband gives it great blessings, and very lovingly visits it often, where it receives great favors and delights: but this is nothing in comparison with those of the spiritual marriage. For although that happens in the soul which is most purged of all affection of creature, (seeing that the spiritual engagement is not made before that;) nevertheless as for the union and the spiritual marriage, the soul needs other positive arrangements from God, his visits and greater gifts, with which he goes about purifying it more, and embellishes and refines it, to be duly disposed toward such a noble union [*All this is the permanent union*]: and for that it takes some time, in some souls more, in others less.

Which has been represented by the daughters who were chosen for King Assuerus (Ahasuerus KJV) (Esther 2:3, 12): For although they had already been taken from their country and from the house of their parents, still before they came to the bed of the king, they were kept enclosed for one year, (although it was in the palace,) so that for six months they were anointed with oil of myrrh and other aromatic ointments, and the rest of the year they used other more exquisite perfumes; and afterward they were led to the bed of the king.

Consequently during the time of this engagement and the want for the spiritual marriage, in the unctions of the Holy Spirit, when the ointments of the arrangements for the union of God are more precious, the agonies of the caves of the soul become accustomed to being extreme and delicate; because, as these ointments are set out more closely and more immediately to the union of God, (for they are more conjoined to him,) on this subject they bring about more flavor for him, and become more delicately fond of him: and so the desire is much more delicate and deep, the desire of God being an arrangement to be united with him. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Section 3)

62. Although it is true, that the soul cannot again give the same God to himself, seeing that in self he is always the same; nevertheless it works wisely and perfectly, giving all that he had given to it, to pay for the love, which is to give all as much as one has received, and God is paid by this present of the soul: for he could not be contented with less, and receives it graciously and with thanks as a thing which belongs to the soul, which is given to him in the sense which it has been said, in that itself he loves it newly and delivers himself freely to it, and in that itself the soul loves; and so there is actually between God and the soul a reciprocal love, in the conformity of the union and in the matrimonial deliverance, in which the goods of the two, which are the divine essence, are possessed by the two in the voluntary deliverance of the one to the other, the one saying to the other what the Son of God said to his Father; (John 17:10) All which is mine is yours, and all which is yours is mine; and in all this I have been enlightened: which is in the other life in the enjoyment without intermission; and in this state of union, when the communication of the soul and of God is put in the act and the practice of love, then I say, the soul can give this present, although he is of greater entity than its capacity and its being. For it is completely clear, that he who has several kingdoms and nations to himself, can certainly give them to whoever seems good to him. And this is the great contentment and satisfaction of the soul, to see that it gives to God more than it has in itself, giving so liberally God to himself, as if a thing of its own, with that divine light and warmth of love, which has been given to it. – And so the deep caverns of the sense, gives light and warmth all together to their friend, together with strange excellences (virtues): all the more because the communication of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is joined in the soul, which are the light and fire of love.

But it is necessary to note here briefly, with which virtues the soul makes this delivery. About which one must notice, that as in the act of this union enjoys a certain image of fruition, which is caused by the union of the understanding and by the affection of God, rejoices in self and obliged, it makes to God a donation or delivery of God, and of itself into God, by the most wonderful means: For as for the look of love, the soul carries itself toward God with strange excellences (virtues); and in the same way touching this vestige of enjoyment, also the same as for (See Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 8, Verse 13 on the double praise that the soul gives to God.) the praise and as for the thanks. And for the look of the first, which is love, it has three principal excellences of love; the first, is that the soul loves God through the same God, which is one admirable excellence, because it loves inflamed by the Holy Spirit, and having in itself the Holy Spirit, like the Father loves the Son, according to what is said (John 17:26) in St. John; So that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and me in them. The second excellence, is to love God in God, because in this vehement union the soul is absorbed in love of God, and God delivers himself to the soul with a great vehemence: The third excellence of love, is to love him there for what he is; because it does not love him only (which holds a little interest) because he is splendid, good, liberal to it but much more, because he is all essentially in self. (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Verse 5-6)

#### FATHER NICHALOS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

63: Albert the Great: The devoted soul must be much united with God, and must have and make its will so conformed to the divine, that it doesn't occupy itself with or adhere to any creature, like when it was not yet created, or as if nothing was but God and the soul alone. (*On the Attachment to God*, Chapters 6 & 8) (*Explanation of the Mystical Phrases of John of the Cross*, Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 3)

64. The highest perfection of man in this life, is to be so much united to God, that all the soul is collected in God his Lord with all its forces and powers, so that it is made one spirit with him, and that it does not remember but God, that it feels or hears only God, and that all its affections united in joy of love rest gently in the single enjoyment of the Creator. (*On the Attachment to God*, Chapter 3) (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Chapter 14, Section 4)

65. The true lover of Jesus Christ, must be so much not led in spirit through the good will to the divine will, and so deprived of all the phantoms (ghosts) and passions, that he is not watchful if he is mocked, loved or of whatever it may be that one does to it. For the good will accomplishes all, and are above all things. From where it comes that if the will is good and purely conformed and united to God in spirit, the flesh and sensuality do not injure it. – The soul is plunged

from all and everything into its Creator, so much that it directs all its operations from all into God its Lord, and looks for nothing outside of him; and so it is in some way transformed into God, in which it cannot think, nor hear, nor love, nor remember if not of God. (*On the Attachment to God*, Chapter 6) (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Chapter 14, Section 4)

66. See Pure Love, Number 29.

67. St. Thomas: There are, says the Angelic Doctor, two unions from the lover to the loved one: the one real, like when the loved one is present to the lover; and the other is in accordance with affection. Love then makes the first union effectively, because it [*This confirms what St. Dennis says, that the whole first movement of the soul toward divine things is love. (See Divine Motion, Number 1)*] arouses one to desire and to look for the presence of the love one, as if being suitable to it and belonging to it; but as for the second union it makes it formally, because love itself is such a union or such a binding; from where it comes that St. Augustine says in the eighth (8me) of the Trinity: that love is a certain liaison conjoining two things, or desiring to conjoin them, namely the love, and what is love: for in what he says conjoining, he is referring to the union of affection, without which there is no love; but what he says, desiring to conjoin, that belongs to the real union. (1.2.Qu28A1) (*Living Flame of Love*, Canticle 3, Chapter 16, Section 1)

68. See Presence of God, Number 15.

69. Cornelius de Lapide: See Presence of God, Number 18.

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

70. Nothing is so natural to the good, as uniting and attracting to self the things which can feel it, as are our souls, which always draw toward and yield to their treasure, that is to say to what they love. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 7)

71. The union is sometimes made without us cooperating in it, unless by a simple coherence, letting us unite without resistance to the divine goodness, like a small loving child in the bosom of its mother, but so languid, that it can make no movement to get there, nor to move close once it is there; but only is very easily taken and drawn into the arms of its mother, and pressed to her chest.

Sometimes we cooperate when being drawn in, we go willingly to back up the gentle force of the goodness, which pull us and draws us close to itself through its love.

Sometimes it seems to us that we begin to join and clasp ourselves to God before he joins himself to us; because we feel the action of the union on our side, without feeling that which happens on the part of God, who still without a doubt always forewarns us, although we do not always feel his forewarning; for if he didn't unite himself to us, never would we unite ourselves to him: he chooses and seizes us before we choose and seize him. But when following his imperceptible charms we begin to unite ourselves to him, he sometimes makes the advancement of our union, helping our imbecility, and clasping himself perceptibly to us, so that we feel that he is entering and penetrating our heart with an incomparable sweetness. And sometimes also as he attracted us imperceptibly to the union, he continues imperceptibly to aid and help us: and we do not know how such a great union is made; but we know well, that our forces are not great enough to do it: so that we judge well by thee, that some secret power is performing his imperceptible death in us. Like the boatmen who carry iron, when under a very weak wind they feel their vessels sway powerfully, they know that they are near the mountains of the magnet, which imperceptibly draw them; and see in this was a knowledgeable and perceptible advancement coming from an unknown and imperceptible means: For so when we see our spirit unite itself more and more to God under the little efforts that our will makes, we judge well that we do not have enough wind to sway so strong, and that the lover of our souls must draw us the secret influence of his grace, which he wants to be imperceptible to us, so that it is more admirable to us, and so that without amusing us by feeling his attractions, we occupy ourselves more purely and simply in uniting ourselves to his goodness.

At no time [*St. Francis of Sales here is only speaking about the fleeting union of the powers.*] is this union made so imperceptibly, that our heart feels neither the divine operation in us, nor our cooperation; so it finds the sole union completely made imperceptibly; in imitation of Jacob, who without thinking about it found himself married to Leah; or rather like another Samson, but happier, he finds himself bound and clasped by the cords of the holy union without us having perceived it.

At other times we feel the clasps, the union being made by perceptible actions, as much on the part of God, as on our part.

Sometimes the union is made by the sole will, and in the sole will, and at no time does the understanding have any part in it; because the will pulls it behind itself, and applies it to its object; giving it a special pleasure in applying itself to look at it, as we see that love pours out a profound and special attention into our corporeal eyes, to stop them from seeing what we love.

Sometimes this union is made by all the faculties of the soul, which gather themselves around the will; not to unite themselves to God, for they are not all capable of it; but to make it more convenient for the will to make its union: For if the other faculties were applied, one each to its proper object, the soul operating through them could not so easily employ itself in the action, through which the union is made with God. Such is the variety of the unions. (*On the Love of God*, Book 7, Chapter 2)

72. Know, (Theotime), that charity is a bond, and a bond of perfection. Whoever has the most charity, he is more tightly united and bound to God. Now we are not speaking of that union which is permanent in us through habit, whether we are sleeping, or we are awake: we are speaking of the union which is made by action, and which is one of the practices of charity and affection (love). Imagine then that St. Paul, St. Dennis, St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Francis, St. Catherine of Genes or of Sienna, are still in this, and that they are sleeping from weariness, after several labors undertaken for the love of God: picture on the other hand some good soul, but not as holy as them, which has been in prayers of the union at the same time: I ask you, my dear (Theotime), who is more united, more clasped, more attached to God, either these great Saints who are sleeping, or this soul which is praying? Certainly these are admirable Lovers, for they have more charity; and their affections, although in some way dormant, are so engaged and taken up with their Master, that they are inseparable from him. But will you tell me, how it can be, that a soul which is in the prayer of union, and even to the point of ecstasy, may be less united to God than those who are sleeping as holy as they may be? Here is what I say to you, Theotime; that soul is further ahead in the exercise of the union; and these ones are further ahead in the union: these ones are united, and are not uniting themselves, single they are sleeping; and that one is in the actual exercise and practice of the union. (*On the Love of God*, Book 7, Chapter 3)

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

73. The loving wedding has already been celebrated here, to the mutual pleasure of God and the soul divinely penetrated by lively inflamed and delicious deeds and charms from its dear Husband: and this is what they both express in their tight and divine union, with innumerable sins: laments. In this reciprocal love the soul burns more and more to reveal, if it were permitted for it, to all the world the greatness and essential beauty of its most dear Husband; and it sees that one cannot praise him worthily, unless from an infinite distance from his infinite merits. Seeing itself penetrated in the estate of love, of light, and of the signs of the excellences of this infinite Object, it is not shocked enough to see the ingratitude of men, who praise so little, and even dishonor such a noble, great and kind Majesty. –

The soul in this state can no longer distrust the faithfulness of its dear Husband, seeing itself pulled from the mass of perdition, and chosen among several thousands of people, to know his infinite beauty, to enjoy it and to love him with a perfect love. That is why it always feels a most gentle exertion of love, which ravishes it and pushes it to reciprocate eternally his love to his Majesty, as it is wholly resolved to do. It cannot do less, being so elevated in him, and so penetrated by him, whose lively action and blazing fire rouse and occupy it in various paths and manners, in unity and mystic simplicity, which keep all its powers collected and melted into one, and where the whole man is already spirit, at least in unity of heart. (*Spirit of the Carmelite Order*, Chapter 23)

74. It is this fruition, which always penetrating more and more the immeasurable total, increases and grows by subtleness and simplicity of repose, which seems to be the means and the results of the said fruition in various senses and manners. He who is here [*Note: placed and fixed; which mark a stable state.*] placed and fixed, understands me well. All, which can be said about this whole fruition, is this word, ineffable repose. – But the infinite Object which is the cause of all this happiness, remains unexpressed in our most wide and extensive fruition; which has only the simple and the ineffable for our departure. This, I say, expresses nothing at all, neither of self, nor of our fruition always perceived better and better, and more and more; for the more we are moved further from feeling as far away as it may be, the more also is this of the sur-eminent order, and in the sur-eminent nature of our divine Object. So well that in itself, we seem to differ not at all from our overwhelmed beatitude and felicity. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 4)

75. I say then that these souls are all lost in the joyful unity, which as unity, does not operate, but is idle. From this unity the People of the Trinity each going out to his proper action, is beatified and made infinitely blessed through a single perpetual act, which is beyond all comprehension and created intelligence. There, is neither time nor eternity, but infinitely beyond this sur-essential Essence resides and dwells wholly in self, and through self, including itself totally in its supreme fullness. –

It is in this fullness and expanse that the souls about which we are speaking are transformed into God and very widely stretched beyond all created and creatable boundaries and limits. They are, I say, God himself in a true sense, either in darkness, or in light; either in passion, or in sur-passion; either in ignorance, or above ignorance. And we test that, this is by the perceptions without knowledge, indeed above that itself: which carries us far beyond all knowledge.

What I said, is true, that each of the three Persons knows and understands this infinite Essence, beyond all that we specified about sur-eminent, and beyond all Personality. Not that the actual comprehension of the distinct Persons is below the vast infinitely over extension of their common Essence: but I am speaking in this way because of the close connection which binds, interweaves and unites them in this their more than essential unity, in which the divine Persons



enjoy their full and whole felicity, in repose and idleness, beyond all distinct Personality. Now this is made thus in us in all manner expressed above.

One can still say with respect to us, that as one knows without knowing, and perceive without perceiving; so in this state we breath, without breathing, die without dying, and live without living: that we are transformed into God, and are himself, beyond all which can be said or conceived about it, seeing that God is infinitely beyond all which can be named: that in this his infinitely sur-essential unity; he enjoys without eternity and without time all self, in self and through self: that although we are himself, we differ still infinitely from this sur-essential, Sur-Essentiality, all the more because it is and has nothing created or creatable, for its own sur-infinitely extended felicity.

However we are divinely transformed in it beyond all reason and learning; our created being remaining for us always: For to believe otherwise would be a strange and completely absurd thing. There I say, well far beyond all perceived fruition, we are what God is, we have what he has, we possess what he possesses, and that in our wholly surpassed love, or rather in his actively and continually enduring love. – In short we are himself, in ourselves, and yet without ourselves. For how would it be possible that this infinitely noble and divine substance could most nobly beatify so many most excellent created substance, by the active force of a more than admirable goodness and love, if in himself, he were not infinitely beyond all the beatitude and felicity, that he can communicate in his most high, most close and most perfect union to all excellence of created and creatable being?

There is then [*All the creatures in God are like grains of sand in the sea; and it is this infinite difference of the All from the nothing, which makes the felicity of pure love.*] only him in him, there is only his essential being in his sur-essentiality, and there will never be, and there has never been any creatable being, which notwithstanding all the comprehensive enjoyment it has of him, in him and through him can be united and conjoined to him, unless from an infinite distance. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 8)

76. In this state the soul is found wholly different than itself, all and totally anticipated by each of the distinct people, who, (like we said) go out to their proper beatification, without going out from their common repose and possessed enjoyment, and from this their and our common sur-essential unity. Still their personal repose exceeds ours all the more and at an infinite distance because, their nature, their Personality and their divine substance exceed the creaturality and capacity of our souls, as active as sur-active, as passive as sur-passive: which nevertheless, because they are there consumed by a whole consummation of all themselves, are transformed into God, very far beyond all that men can conceive of by this name. –

There is in my opinion how the deiform deification of the creature, which has exceeded all creaturality, is different from the total Deity, infinitely abstracted from all which is created, not created, or creatable; as sur-essentially sur-essential and sur-eminently sur-eminent as it can be; being understood and being known wholly in self, by self, and for self.

What I will still say about the souls deified through transformation, in all the manners expressed here above; is that what seems to them at present to proceed from their proper life, from their own action, and from their passion, is only God, (See the second part of the Treatise of the Torrents, Explanations of the Canticle, Chapter 7, Verses 10-11, St. Matthew 15:15-16, and of St. Luke 2:22-24) who lives, acts and suffers in them, in the essence of which being entirely consumed, lost and totally transformed they are God himself above all nominality of God, as we said. In such a way that one can say and one must believe, that what one desires and asks from such souls, is in the same instant without instant, mode and arranged, not as much by them, as divinely and by God himself, either in action or sur-action, either in passion or sur-passion, either in perception or imperceptions; [*Which is to say although what is agreed may be ignored by the people who agreed to it.*] in ignorance, or above ignorance. (*Mystical Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 8)

77. All the states, which precede this one; through whatever path it may be, are deducted by the Mystics. But this one includes them all in a divine enough manner; through which one sees oneself and feels melted and reduced to a very small point, which is the unique center, from where are pulled all the lives that can be concerned of. That which falls under feeling, and under the simple and specific perception seems to rather show what is created in an excellent way, that the Uncreated where we are settled, which keeps up purely attached over all love; in nakedness and unique simplicity and all that is sur-essential; over all the aforementioned effects of the divine fire, which embraced and consumed all the soul in itself in the time of its action. In such a way that the soul having arrived here, finds nothing to say or think; not even to express what it has seen or felt in the previous states, and still less in this one. (*Mystic Cabinet*, Part 1, Chapter 10, Section 7)

78. In this genuine love, the soul is so much one single thing with its Beloved, that it no longer has any order, any consideration, or any reflection of the diversity of time; his unique love being to it always one in all things and in himself; considering that love is all the pleasure, all the fire, all the joy, glory, felicity, repletion, holiness, essence and totality of its infinite Object.

He who then is [*Loss in Jesus Christ is the transformed state. Jesus Christ having lost and hidden the soul with him in God, makes it leave with him reclothe in himself, and living his life in all his states, or in some of them only according to his holy will.*] lost in love, lives very happily in the image of Jesus Christ, and in his most loving, interior,

divine, glorious and most unique life, which is most secret to several, and most known to several. Such a love is most lovingly and entirely lost in the abyss of this most divine and invigorating life of our most dear Savior and Husband, true God and true man, made man for the love of men, and for the very strong and very rapid attraction of his intimate friends to self, so that they may no longer ever be separated from him, but that in all eternity they may be one single thing in all himself, not by nature, but by grace. (*Mirror and Flames of Love*, Chapter 7)

79. Who is it, O my Husband, who will express the mutual love and the mutual delights that we both possess in our common union and repose? Marvels are being told about love: but one finds neither words nor comparisons, which express that in the manner, that I feel it in you and for you. But, O my Love, nothing to me or for me; all to you and for you, who as you are all, makes all in me, not for me, but in you and for you: and who in that itself has made it that I have become, not so much as much, but madly and passionately in love with you, and following that I became love itself of love in love. (*Soliloquy* 3)

80. Can I then express anything other than the union, which is between you and me, unless you are wholly simple in my own flesh? Doesn't that say it all? Yes, since that is it all. And I am very shocked to see the boldness, that some of your particular Wives have to make clear to men the abysses of this subject. For one sees evidently that to speak of this as highly as one can, or as little as one does, is to rather to diminish the glory and the depth of our simple, unique, intimate and reciprocal union in all us, than to say something about it. On the contrary the silence on this point would be all my pleasure and all my deduction: For I know that through these means I will more easily uncover the mystery of it, in the ineffable of us both, in our common and reciprocal union; and that working in this way I will honor you, it seems to me to infinity. What do I say? Pardon me, O my Husband, I want to say that dwelling in the silence, I will see you and will ineffably possess you. But what do I say again, O my dear Husband? It seems that I know not what I say, nor what I do. We both possess each other, you in me and for me, and me in you and for you. (*Soliloquy* 6, Chapter 1)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

81. In the mystic prayer, the soul through naked faith is elevated to a most pure love; and it is through this love that God is known. He is known and perceived, because he is tasted and savored, and because, as St. Gregory says very well, love itself is a knowledge, which proceeds in the souls of the union with he who they love; apart from that all the more that love is exquisite in the mystic operations, all the more is the union tight in them. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 9)

82. Solomon describes to us marvelously in the Cantic of the Canticles, the method and the practice of a perfect prayer. For this book that he composed as a particular instrument of the Holy Spirit, is a parley and a sacred and familiar interview between God, and a singularly loved soul, ardently in love with this divine Husband; who explains and understands the highest secrets of the divine love, and of all the unitive prayer; where he describes with an admirable artifice, the various accidents of loves that the soul suffer, which have arrived at the intimate and sovereign union with God. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 2, Section 2)

83. The true God of infinite Majesty looks at, loves and treats the soul which is united to him through charity, as his (See the Explanation of the Cantic, 1:1, 2:6, 4:8-9) Wife; and the soul reciprocally looks at and loves God and behaves toward him like toward its Husband: all is common between them; they agree on everything; they act and converse lovingly together with a mutual intelligence. The exercise (St. Thomas 2.2, Qu.23, Art. 1) of this friendship, which proceeds in the soul from a perfect charity, makes it want for God all these goods, that it rejoices in, and that it takes delight in for the love of himself; and God reciprocally effectively love the soul, so that he wants for it and communicates to it his same goods: and the tighter the union is, the more these two spirits observe the laws of this divine friendship, the more they embrace and enjoy each other through a mutual benevolence. —

If the glory of a soul united to God by the acts of prayer is great; one must say that the pleasure that it feels there, is not less so: for prayer is the time and the place of the mutual delights between God and the soul, who converse together with familiarities worthy of the infinite goodness, and of the condescendence of this supreme Majesty. I wish, said one well raised soul, (Psalms 103:34 Douay or 104:34 KJV) that my interview agrees with my God; for as for me I have no pleasure which equals that of hearing his voice, and of enjoying his presence.

It is for this reason that some holy Fathers of the church have assured, that the pleasure that the soul feels in prayer, if it has attained some considerable degree of union, can be called Paradise on earth. The most perfect happiness of man in this life, says the Seraphim Doctor (*On the Advancement of Religion*, Chapter 5), is to be so much united to God, that all its forces and its powers being collected in God, it becomes one same spirit with him, so that it feels and sees only him, and that all its affections plunged and reunited in the joy of the holy love, rest gently in the enjoyment of the Creator.

And the Angelic speaks of it in the same sense, when he says (1.2.Quest.99.A3) that in perfect men, such as those who are in the unitive path, and who have attained some eminent degree of prayer, there is some beginning of the future beatitude: because although in this life they cannot have the perfect enjoyment of the Sovereign Good, which is

reserved for the other, where they will see God face to face and with curtains pulled, there is yet in them [*Those who deprive themselves voluntarily of these ineffable delights, are like those who let themselves die of thirst while near the waters of a fountain.*] some resemblance, and some participation of this eternal felicity, in the actual enjoyment that they have of God in the unitive prayer; since this enjoyment is a real experience of the comforts of God, and a certain intimate conjunction with this Sovereign Good, with the understanding under the reason of a sovereign truth, and with the will under that of a universal goodness, sovereignly delightful; which can without a doubt, and must be called a foretaste of the beatitude; the soul producing then the most perfect acts who are possible, and that Theologians call for this result by the name of beatitudes.

That which is certainly remarkable and considerable in all this, is that the glory and the pleasure which is in prayer, is inseparably accompanied by a perfection and a holiness equal to both of them: For as the union of the soul with God is made by charity, which is the bond of all perfection; and that the property of all love, and especially of the divine, as more effective, is to transform the will into what it loves; loving God, it is wholly deified and transformed into him through the participation of its spirit, no longer operating but by its motions and instincts, which causes in it a wonderful resemblance, in the life and in the morals (manners), with the Beloved, founded in a perfect conformity of its will to his, from where necessarily proceeds the continual exercise of all the virtues which make a soul truly holy, and make it touch the point of this lofty and sublime perfection, recommended in the Gospel by our Lord (Matthew 5:48), where he exhorts us to strive to acquire a perfection similar to that of the heavenly Father. (Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 1, Section 3)

SECTION 67  
THE WILL OF GOD IS OUR WILL

That the Will of God may be our will.

SHORT METHOD

All, which happens to us from moment to moment, is the order and will of God, and all that we need. (Chapter 6, Number 1)

As for the practice (Of abandon) it must be, to lose without cease all personal will in the will of God; -- Contents in us with the actual moment which brings us with self the eternal order of God over us, and which is to us a declaration as much infallible of the will of God, as it is common and inevitable for all. (Chapter 6, Number 4)

CANTICLE

When the union is felt in the single will, through an amorous enjoyment, without either distinct sight or knowledge; it is the union of love attributed to the Holy Spirit, as a distinct Person; and this one is the most perfect of all, because it approaches more than any other the essential union; and because it is principally through it that the soul arrives there. (Chapter 1, Verse 1)

One comes to a stand still too much at created although pious means; God alone (Psalms 142:10 Douay or 143:10 KJV) can teach to do his will, because he alone is our God. (Chapter 1, Verse 6)

The lips represent the will, which is the mouth of the soul; because with affection it clasps and embraces strongly what it loves. And as the will of this Mistress loves only her God, and all her affections are for him: the Husband compares her to a ribbon dyed scarlet, which signifies the affections reunited in one single will, which is all charity and all love; all the forces of this will being reunited in their divine Object. (Chapter 4, Verse 3)

That marks clearly enough, that all the affections of the Mistress have been reunited in God alone, and that she has lost all her wishes in the will of her God.

In such a way that the abandon of all herself to the will of God, through the loss of all personal will, and the uprightness with which she applies herself to God without returning any more into herself, are the arrows which wounded the heart of her Husband. (Chapter 4, Verse 9)

The steps on the outside are also full of beauties: for this soul is well ordered, as if guided by the will of God, and by the order of providence. (Chapter 7, Verse 1)

Having lost all will in that of God, it cannot want anything. (Chapter 8, Verse 14)

AUTHORITIES

ST. JOHN CLIMAQUE

1. I will present to God my will in prayer, and I will wait for him to impel me by assuring me of his. (*Holy Ladder of Perfection, by which we may ascend to Heaven*, Step 27, Article 68)

2. Let us strip ourselves of our own will: let us approach Jesus Christ in this way completely made, when we present ourselves before him to pray, and ask him only for the single knowledge of his will. For it will be then that the Spirit of God will descend unto us, then he will take over the government of our soul will lead securely into Heaven. (Step 28, Article 28)

THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST

3. He is truly learned, who knows well how to perform the will of God, and abandon his own. (Book 1, Chapter 3, Section 6)

4. Make me always desire and want that which is most agreeable to you, and what you desire most from me. That your will may be in me; and that mine may always follow yours, and be perfectly conformed to it. That to want or to not want, may always be in me in the same way as in you; and that I may be able to want only what you want, and not want what you do not want.

Make me be dead to all that is in the world, and make me love to remain unknown in the world, and to be scorned for that of you. Make me rest in you, rather than in all that I may ever long for, and make my heart find in your bosom its peace and its joy. You alone are our sanctuary and our port; outside of you all is arduous, all is troubled. (Book 3, Chapter 15, Sections 3-4)

5. He is exposed to great falls who does not throw himself into your bosom, and who does not rest on your sole goodness of all which regards him. Do me the kindness only, that my will may rest firm in you, and be inclined always toward you; and after that dispose of me as it pleases you; for it is impossible that all that happens to me according to your order is not always good. If you want me to be in darkness, may you be blessed; if you want me to be in the light may you also be blessed. If you design to console my soul; may you be praised; if you want to affect it, may you still be blessed. (Book 3, Chapter 17, Section 2)

6. See Abandon, Number 3.

7. Attach yourself firmly to my will, and nothing will be able to harm you. If you seek one thing rather than another, and if you pretend to be in a certain place, to satisfy thus your interest and your own will; you will never be in repose, and your worries will follow you everywhere, because you will always lack something that you desire, and you will always find some contradiction in the same place that you will have chosen for yourself. (Book 3, Chapter 27, Section 2)

8. I would wish you to be of this disposition, and that no longer being engaged in your own love, you would remain attached to my will, and to the orders of he whom I gave to you as guide and as Father. (Chapter 32, Section 3)

9. See Property, Number 4.

10. It is no small virtue to surrender yourself in the little things.

The genuine progress in piety consists in renouncing oneself; and he who is in this state walks in liberty and with very great assurance. (Book 3, Chapter 39, Sections 3-4)

11. It is then that your will as if lost and absorbed in me, will no longer desire anything, either foreign, or particular. (Chapter 49, Section 6)

#### ST. CATHERINE OF GENES

12. As Adam wanted to perform his will against that of God, on the contrary we must also have the will of God as our object, so that it effaces and annihilates our own personal one: and because we alone would not know how to annihilate this personal will, because of our wicked inclination and pride, it is very useful to submit oneself to someone for the love of God, in order to perform purely and justly for their honor someone else's will rather than our own. And the more one subjugates oneself to that, the more one will find oneself in liberty, delivered from this wicked plague of the personal will, which is so subtle, so fine and so malicious so intimate and deeply rooted in us, and covers itself with so many means, and defends itself with so many reasons, that it seems to be a Devil full of subtleness and malice: so much that when we can do it in one way, we do it in another, under many pretexts of charity, or of justice, or of perfection; or under the cover of enduring it for the love of God. (*Life*, Chapter 12)

13. See Purification, Number 20.

14. See Abandon, Number 10.

15. We must want to perform the will of God, having done on our part all the good that we can do: after that all which happens to us, and which is not in our power, we must always take from the pure arrangement and disposition of God, and unite ourselves to it in everything through will. (*Life*, Chapter 31)

16. Whoever will taste [*O that it is true, divine will of my God that you are the bed of repose for the souls which are abandoned to you.*] the repose of the union to the will of God, it will seem to him starting with this present life, that he is already in paradise. Those who always make a point of annihilating their will taste in some sort this contentment. When man loses his own will, God takes his free will, in order to operate through him, and let nothing come in his will other than what pleases him, and his wishes thus regulated are after all perfect. O annihilation of will! O singular virtue! You are queen of the heaven and of the earth; you are subject to nothing; and so you find nothing, which can cause you pain; because the sorrows and the displeasures are caused by the spiritual or temporal property.

O if I could say what I know and what I feel about this annihilation of the personal will, I am certain that each man would be as much horrified by his own, that if it were a Devil; one would never support his opinion, one would never excuse oneself, one would never say this thing is mine! (*Life*, Chapter 31)

#### ST. TERESA

17. The will is occupied, in such a way that it remains captive, without knowing how; only does it give its consent so God may put it in captivity, knowing well that it is captive of he whom it loves. O Jesus and my Lord, how much your

love helps me here! For it keeps ours so bound, that it does not leave, the liberty to love anything but you during this time. The two other powers help the will, so that it is made able and suitable to enjoy such a great good, although it happens sometimes that the will being well united, they inconvenience a lot: but as for now, it does not set great store by them, and it rests in enjoyment and in quietude: for if it wants to collect them together, it will be lost. (Life, Chapter 14)

18. The will alone is what maintains the combat, but the two other powers return unrestrained to create trouble and importunity. Now as the will is firm in its calm and in its suspension, it suspends them a second time, in which state they remain for a little while, then they return to their first being. In this several hours of prayer can go by, and in fact they do; for the two other powers having begun to get drunk, and to taste this precious and divine wine, go back easily to being lost, in order to be won with more advantage, and accompany the will in this way. (Life, Chapter 18)

19. See Proper Operations, Number 13.

20. See Prayer, Section 2, Number 14.

#### THE BLESSED JOHN OF THE CROSS

21. The soul withdrawing its will from all the apparent evidence and signs, is elevated and exalted in a most pure faith, which God pours into it and increases in a degree much more intense and together with it he enhances the two other theological virtues, namely charity and hope, where it enjoys most high divine knowledge, by means of the naked and obscure custom of faith, and possesses a great delight of love by means of charity, with which the will rejoices in nothing but in living God: in brief the soul enjoys a satisfaction in the will by means of hope. Now all this is an admirable benefit, which has a direct and essential importance for the perfect union of the soul with God. (Ascent of Mt. Carmel, Book 3, Chapter 31)

22. See Transformation, Number 13.

23. See Union, Number 50.

24. As the fiancée puts her love and her thought into nothing other than her Husband; in the same way the soul in this state already no longer has any affection for will, or for intelligence of understanding, or care or action, that is not all brought to God with its appetites; because it is almost divine and deified, in such a manner [*Note: it does not even have the first movements against that which is the will of God.*] that it does not even have the first movements against that which is the will of God, as far as it can know and understand. For as an imperfect soul ordinarily has at least the first movements, in accordance with to the understanding, in accordance with the will, in accordance with memory and the appetites inclined toward evil and imperfection: so the soul which is in this state, in accordance with the understanding, the will, and memory and the appetites ordinarily in the first movements is moved and inclined toward God, because of the great help and the firmness that it already has in God, and because of the perfect conversion that it already has to the good.

Which David certainly noticed in speaking of his soul in this state, (Psalms 61:2-3 Douay or 62:1-2 KJV) Will not my soul be subject of God? For from him comes my safety. He is my God and my Savior, he who received me; I will no longer be moved: in the place where he says he who received me, he gives to means that his soul for having been received in God and united with him, as we say here, must no longer have any movements against God. (Canticle between the Wife and the Husband, Couplet 19)

25. See Non-Desire, Number 20.

26. See Spiritual Marriage, Number 9.

27. See Idleness, Number 5.

28. See Communications, Section 1, Number 4.

#### FATHER NICHOLAS OF JESUS MARIA

gives an account of

29. Albert the Great: See Union, Number 63.

#### FATHER BENOIT OF CANFELD

30. This essential will is purely spirit and life, totally abstracted, purified in itself, and deprived of all shapes and images of things created corporeal or spiritual, temporal or eternal; and is not apprehended by sense nor by the

judgment of man, nor by human reason; but it is outside of all capacity, and above all understanding of men; because it is nothing other than God himself: it is not something separated, or still joined or united with God, but God himself and his Essence. For this will being in God, it follows that it is God, since in God there is only God: for if there were something other than him, there would be something imperfect, all things being imperfect which are not him; and even he would have many imperfections, if his will were something other than his essence; because he would not be a pure act, that is to say, a simple Essence (as the Doctors assure) but he would be some composition. – Moreover he would not be God, if his will were a being apart from and not his essence. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 1)

31. This [*He is speaking of purification by means of nakedness.*] destitution through his first act of purgation, purges the soul particularly of a most secret image, that it always restrained from the will of God, which is the second fault hidden from the contemplation, which is spoken about in the fourth chapter: the image so subtle, fine and spiritual, that in the interior will it did not perceive it, persuaded itself that purely and without images or species was it contemplating this will in its essence: and even [*It must have been very subtle. One knows what one possesses as far as spiritual things only in losing it.*] it could never perceive this image, until it had been purged of it; all the more because an imperfect thing, is not known as imperfect, to he who knows nothing of the more perfect: Now this soul knew nothing more perfect, because this image is the most perfect and the most pure thing that it had ever contemplated; and consequently it could not recognize it as imperfect; although when it was purged of it, it knew that it was imperfect. [*In order to not take offense at this term imperfect, of which I have made use in my Writings, one must conceive that there are two sorts of imperfections in the spiritual things: one which is enclosed in its subject; and the other which is only so by comparison to a more perfect thing. Like for example in the sciences there is the perfection of an inferior science: he who does it is perfectly learned in this science; but he is not at all in relation to what he learns next: the new science (skill) that he acquires makes him understand better that all the reasonings, the little that he knew in comparison with what he has learned since, although he believed they very learned: and it is even usual for the semi-scholars to believe they know all; That is why they are more fixed in their opinions than a perfectly learned man; because the former believing themselves to know all never learn anything, and the latter pulls this knowledge from the profundity of science, because he certainly sees that he knows little in comparison with what remains for him to know: For finally if a Doctor of Theology, because he is an able doctor, believes himself a good Physician, he will deceive himself; because it is a particular science joined to experience; and if an able Physician believes himself a good theologian, he will mistake himself, Mystic science is the same. It has its agreements with the other sciences, but at the same time it has infinite differences from them. And in the same way a learned Physician without any experience in his art, will never be a good Physician, although he may be very learned; also in the science of the interior, experience is the true science, and even the only; because the science of the interior is a wisdom infused through the inside, of which experience is enlightening and teaches itself without successive reasoning; which is not found in any other science, in which study precedes experience. The study of Wisdom is the contemplation of Wisdom, because this Wisdom is described itself in the spirit of he who contemplates it, and in the heart of he who loves it.*]

*There is still a comparison to imperfection in relation to a greater perfection. A child of perfect beauty cannot be a beautiful man but by changing in beauty: For it is certain that a man, who preserves all the traits of a very beautiful child, would never be a beautiful man, not having the right proportions. It is therefore in this sense that things are called perfect at one time, which appeared most perfect at another.]*

If one asks, how does it get rid of this image since it does not know it? I respond, that it is through the fire of love, which is still a divine operation, and not its, and in which it is more passive than active. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 5)

32. This second method is more removed from feeling, more supernatural, more naked and more perfect than the other, in the way that it has been said. For whereas the other operates nakedly and supernaturally, then solely, or at least principally, when the soul is drawn outside of itself by the force of the aforementioned actual attraction of the will of God; this one does it also, when such an attraction was not so actual, but only virtual. The other method is spiritual, naked and supernatural, when the soul is raised and made bare; but this one is it also, when one is even hindered exteriorly and occupied by affairs; this [*method, without method*] method making the exterior things interior; the corporeal, spiritual; and the natural, supernatural.

Now this method is nothing other than the beginning and the end, namely this will of God. (*Rule of Perfection*, Part 3, Chapter 8)

#### ST. FRANCIS OF SALES

33. See Quietude, Section 1, Number 48.

34. I am not here for my interest and service, but to obey and serve the will of my Lord and Sculptor; - (Pure Love, Number 31)

35. O true God, it is a good way to stand in the presence of God, to be, to want always and forever to be in his good pleasure! For so as I think in all occurrences, or even in sleeping deeply, we are still more deeply in the most holy presence of God: yes indeed. Theotime, for if we love him, we fall asleep, not only in his view but at his pleasure, and not only through his will, but according to his will. – Then at our awakening, if we think of it, [*It is an experience of very advanced souls. (See the Explanation of the Canticle, Chapter 5, Verse 2)*] we find that God has always been present to us, and that neither did we distance ourselves nor separate ourselves from him. We have therefore been there in the presence of his pleasure, though without seeing him and without catching a glimpse of him: so that we could say, in imitation of Jacob; (Genesis 28:6). Truly I slept nearby my God and in the arms of his divine presence and providence; and I did not know it.

Now this quietude, in which the will is in repose only by a simple acquiescence of the divine pleasure, wanting to be at prayer without any pretension but to be in sight of God, depending on whether it pleases him; it is a sovereignty excellent quietude, all the more because it is pure of all sort of interest, the faculties of the soul taking no contentment in it, nor even the will, besides in the supreme point, in which it contents itself with having no other contentment, besides that of being without contentment for the love of the contentment and pleasure of its God, in whom it rests. For it is the summit of the amorous ecstasy to not have its will in its contentment, but in that of God. (*On the Love of God*, Book 6, Chapter 11)

36. See Non-Desire, Number 34.

#### BROTHER JOHN OF ST. SAMSON

37. The best spiritual life that men can practice is to lose oneself in spirit through an actual, eternal and total resignation to the will and for the sake of God. That is why there is no doubt that it is in your best interest to overcome all difficulties and all fear, even a reasonable one, and to pass onto the works that God now desires from you. On all these occasions of abandon to the order and to the desire of God, there is a very great gain to be made, as you know how important it is to leave God for God, the more the works to which you are applying yourself are found to be arduous and laborious, and even opposed to your interior solitude, the more also that will bring you deeper and lose you excellently in God. For it is in his love that we act and desire to do everything, according to the order of his most perfect will; in such a way that by a total conformity we transform ourselves in an excellent manner into him, according to the ardent love with which we love him in truth. (Letter 51)

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE MYSTIC DAY

38. The object of the Prayer of repose, is nothing other than God, in whom the soul rests as long as this quietude who admits no thought, last: which is proved by the following reason.

The first is taken from the way, in which the will rests in its object; for this object is not perceived by the will, several people say. Or if it is, as is more probable, this knowledge is so fine and so direct, that it cannot know in what it is resting; all the more because the understanding cannot give it any more knowledge than it has: Now the understanding could not say, what is the object in which the will rests although it sees it, like one cannot discern a thing that one sees from far away. The understanding certainly presents a desirable object to the will, but it cannot say what it is: so that in this prayer the will rests without knowing in what; which creates a large conjecture, that the object of this prayer is not created, since the will being a free power, never makes out to love a created object, without the understanding showing it the suitability, that there is between it and its object, and the good which is there. For a created object does not have such sympathy with the will, that it draws it to itself almost naturally. The good of the object must therefore be perceived by it, as fitting; and as for this result it is necessary for the understand to reason and discovers on the proprieties of this object presented to the will; which cannot come about without or reflected or perceived act, or at least which can be so by the understanding, when it reflects on its act. That is why when the will makes its way toward an object which is not perceived, and which cannot be so, one must say that it is the Sovereign Good which is represented to it, toward which it makes it ways without knowing toward what it is inclined.

Secondly: In this prayer the will rests in God, rather by sympathy than by knowledge, like heavy things making their way toward their center, without knowledge of the suitability that there is between them and their center: Thus is iron drawn by the magnet, without knowing the suitability that it has with it. The understanding in this prayer does nothing else, but what does the hand of man, which takes the magnet to near it to iron at a proportionate distance, which without being pushed or raised other than by a natural sympathy, despite its weight, goes to embrace this dear magnet: in this same way the understanding presents and nears it object to the will, without exposing what it is, and without helping it to be raised toward it; nevertheless (*See Short Method, Chapter 11, Number 3, of the central yearning*) by a natural sympathy, with the forces that grace gives to it, it makes it way to it, and rests there without knowing in what, no more than the iron attached to the magnet. Now who could have as a great sympathy and suitability with our soul, as God, in the image of whom it is created? The likeness is the effect of love and of union; and as God is the source of all good, each person has a natural inclination to love him, as a common good, in the same way that the rivers going out from the sea return there by natural instinct. The common good is preferred to the particular, and each part is inclined and moves toward the good of all, which exposes the hand to blows in order to preserve the chief; thus by a natural



instinct, each person dedicates himself to God like to the fountain of beatitude, and like one part for the good of all: but that is accomplished certainly more perfectly by the virtue of charity.

The third reason is taken from the way, in which the will embraces its object in this prayer: For it is by raising itself above all which is created and itself, above the senses and even the reasoning sphere, up to the ridge of peak of the spirit; showing that its object is more elevated than itself, and than all which is created; since to attain this one must elevate oneself above all, and climb above self. And what is more considerable, is that this soul, thus elevated above the highest mountains of created things, scattering the rays of its sight as much as it wants, it nevertheless sees its object so obscurely, that it cannot catch a glimpse of it, so much does it show itself to be raised above all. Now who could be as highly elevated above the soul made in the image of God, as God himself? What confirms this is that the soul would not be able to raise itself higher in order to attain an object, without knowing what it is, if the soul did not have for him a natural inclination, which is created with it. (*Mystic Day*, Book 1, Treatise 1, Chapter 10, Section 2)

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I add to all the Authorities mentioned up to here, what Father Benoit of Canfeld says at the end of the Preface of the third part of his *Rule of Perfection*, or of the essential will.

In so far, he says, as in this third Part that will be able to be found some phrases of which simpletons, or those who are not versed in Mystic Theology, nor familiar with the Doctors who deal with them, might be incapable of understanding some terms, that they might judge to not be about progressing, I judged it to expedient to give an account of them here along with the holy Doctors who made use of them. Such would be these phrases (propositions).

Being united to God without any method. (St. Dennis: *Mystic Theology*, Chapter 8), (St. Augustine: *On the Spirit and on the Soul*, Chapter 11, Verse 3), (St. Bonaventure: *Mystic Theology*, Chapter 3, Part 4), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4, Chapters 27-28), (Orig. and (Vercellensis) in St. Bonaventure, *Way 3 of the Eternity*, Part 3, Dist. 2)

Contemplating the divine Essence without forms or images. (St. Bonaventure: *Way 3 of Eternity* Distinct. 6, Part 1), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4, Chapter 30)

Seeing God, namely, as he can be seen, in this life. (St. Gregory's Book 14 & 18 of *Morals*), (St. Bonaventure: *In the Way to Eternity*, Dist.4, Article 4, Dist.6, and in the *Way 6 to Eternity*, Distinct. 6), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4, Chapters 27 & 29)

Contemplating God without images. (Orig. on the Cant. 2, St Bernard on the Canticle, Sermon 53), (Richard: *Contemplation*, Book 1, Chapter 8), (St. Bonaventure: *Mystic Theology*, Chapter 3, Part 4 & Unique Question: *Way 1 to Eternity*, Dist.4), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4, Chapters 27 & 29-30)

Cessation of operation, or good idleness. (St. Bonaventure: *Way 5 to Eternity*, Dist. 6), (After Lincoln on the *Mystic Theology* of St. Dennis', and the same *Mystic Theology*, Chapter 3, Part 4), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 1, Chapter 1 & Part 4, Chapters 27-28)

Not thinking about God by imaginary thought. (St. Bonaventure: *Mystic Theology*, Chapter 3 & Last Part 4)

Baring of the spirit. (Orig. on Canticle 2, St. Bernard on the Canticle, Sermon 53), (St. Bonaventure: in the *Way 3 to Eternity*, Part 3, Dist.4), (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4)

Inaction of God. (Harphius: *Mystic Theology*, Book 3, Part 4)

Annihilation. (St. Dennis' on *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, Chapter 2), (Harphius: several times in *Mystic Theology*)

I am omitting several Authorities, to avoiding being prolix, considering that these will be sufficient for the full satisfaction of all, and notice, that when I state Harphius, it is always according to the correction made in Rome and as much St. Bonaventure as him, depending on whether both have been recently printed. I believe that there is no other passage or term of which the most simple may not be capable; and that if I knew of any, it would be easy for me to confirm them by similar authorities.

## CONCLUSION

*[On the truth of the interior unmistakable everywhere, and oppositions that the Devils and men make to it, but uselessly. Submission and docility of the Author.]*

There is nothing in the order of nature, no more than in that of grace, which does not very clearly prove the truth of the INTERIOR. This truth is so much spread out in all which subsists, that an enlightened person discovers it in all things: and although there is no truth among men, although they are all liars, because they are all guilty; one is not allowed with the thousand false traits, that the Devil has carved into them, to discover this truth, which is an emanation of the Divinity, necessarily scattered in all the creatures, which have been produced by the will and the power of God.

There is nothing in nature, either plants, elements, stones, which does not have a spirit and a wit. It is the means of their subsistence and the cause of their incorruption: in their corruption itself, this wit and this spirit are preserved; but to discover them, it is necessary to destroy the natural form of the thing, from which one wants to draw out the spirit and the wit. The atmosphere furnishes this spirit and this wit to those who draw it out with machines: the earth, the plants and the metals themselves let this universal principle be discovered in them.

This wit signifies the divine Wisdom and the spirit this enlivening Spirit. The truth of the interior is discovered in all, which is and subsists. There is no creature, which in becoming incorruptible through its own destruction, does not teach us that our annihilation and our destruction is what makes us incorruptible, reuniting us to our Everything (ALL), and putting us in the truth of Wisdom and the enlivening Spirit. There is not one flower, which does not teach us, that however agreeable it appears to our eyes, it would count for nothing if it were not perpetuated by its death and its decay. Plants, fruits and all which is, eternalized only by its destruction; as if God had wanted to give us a greater idea of his Everything (ALL), by the destruction of all which subsists, than by their creation; since it is true that their destruction itself, in making us see the short duration of the things of the world, reveal to us their principle by their incorruption in their corruption itself.

If all natural things subsist, even in their apparent destruction, that is a great argument for the immortality of the soul; but this is not what I claim to prove, since any reasoning man will never doubt it. What I propose is that in all that the spirit of truth is discovered, and a sovereign reason of the conduct of God toward the soul. There is not one place in the Scriptures, not one sacred or profane story, not even a fable, where one does not discover this truth: not one event in the order of nature and of grace. We see the fortunes of men to be almost an assurance of their misfortune. Youth is imperfect, although it is the perfection of the beauty of man. Man subsists little in his perfect state: he grows and increases up to the perfection of his state; after which he becomes old, and feels in himself only the same things, which made him come to the perfection of youth, of health, of beauty, or the spirit, leave how little by little, and that he feels no more than sad remains: following which, after the destruction of the parts, the totality is lost (to speak thus) by death; but this apparent destruction makes all its incorruption and its immortality. The spirit is cultivated by the sciences, but that which makes its ornament, uses it and destroys it subsequently. The pleasures which seem to be the goal of the desires of man are the death of these same desires; and by dint of wanting to be delivered to pleasure, all pleasure leaves it, and nothing causes it more: so that it is punished by its own dissoluteness. There is not one story, where we do not see after excessive fortune, a surprising decadence. The glory of a Kingdom signifies to us its coming destruction: the calm marks the storm.

All the beginnings of spiritual life are full of sweetness, although accompanied by penitence. It is this mixture of spiritual delights and bodily austerities, which makes the interior pleasure so stimulating. These beginnings are like a beautiful flower, that a child admires and picks, but than an excellent gardener let's fade in order to perpetrate it by its seed. If this state did not change, it would perish in not perishing. It is this which makes God conduct the soul through such strange reversals, which are only like a withering to this flower, [*withering*] which increases in proportion that its seed dies. Although this seed appears dead, it bears fruit, only after it has been cast into the earth where it spoils, according to the testimony of Jesus Christ himself.

The conduct that God holds over man is a universal conduct: for although there is the particular order which regards each of us, it is nevertheless so much dependent on this general order, for the little that it was moved from it, it would put all in disorder. Disorder, the reversals of the Empires, are subsequent to this general order; and that which appears to us to be disorder, because of our manner of seeing things, is an admirable order in accordance with divine Wisdom: so that this particular disorder, is what preserves the general order.

It is therefore certain that this is the conduct of God. One considers a flower happy, because it is picked in its beauty by the hand of the King, and that it gave him an instant of pleasure. A person, who dies in the early beginnings of the spirit, in all his interior beauty, is like this pleasant flower. No one doubts the pleasure that it has given: but as for these rare flowers which are never picked, which wither and pressed by the gardener, one pays them no attention; however they are immortalized by their death, which nevertheless makes them appear nasty in the eyes of men, in the same flower beds which they are decorated so few days before.

The general order is therefore, that God establishes, that he destroys what he has established, and that he perpetrates the things by this destruction. And this is what he does in the order of grace: he established first the virtues: but as they would be similar to the beauty of a flower that the wind and the heat spoil, he draws the spirit from this virtue, removes from it all flash (brilliance) on the outside, from fear that it may be corrupted by vanity, he leaves for it

the spirit and the wit, that is to say, that he leaves it the essential and the truth, and that he removes from it the flash (brilliance): and it is in this manner that he makes it immortal. It is the same with his favors, he removes after having giving them all that there is which is dazzling, and consequently amusing; and he leaves it only the substance; that is to say, that God gives to the soul the qualities proper to attract his favors, in removing from it the apparent favor. The more God takes care to destroy a thing, the more it is dear to him. Men envisage things only superficially, so that they are horrified by any sort of destruction, not understanding enough, that God destroys only a deceptive flash, and that he leaves the solid.

Is not the death, which is the destruction of a life full of sorrow, the cradle of genuine life? God puts his pleasure in the truth of his Spirit and his Wisdom in all the beings; because this Spirit and this Wisdom are the same truth, which is nothing other than himself; and there is nothing in all the creatures which is properly his, nor an emanation from himself, but this Spirit and this Wisdom.

The Devil has worked to destroy by deceptive and dazzling outward appearances the essence of the truth; but all that he has been able to do has been to cover it. Men have back him up in that; such that attaching themselves unruly to the exterior of all things, they did not penetrate his spirit: A small number of men have discovered in the natural things their quintessence, which is this spirit and this wit; still they haven't penetrated all the uses of them. A small number of spiritual men have penetrated the spirit of Wisdom and truth, scattered in all sort of goods, which makes up the essence and the incorruptible all of it. This knowledge of the truth hidden in the essence of a thing, prevented them from being scrupulously attached to a thousand small sparkles in the good, that the vulgar man values, because he does not penetrate further; whereas on the contrary, they, in arousing that a flower has all the pleasantness that it can have, made more out of its fading and its root than of its flash. The vulgar man amused either by the flash on the outside, or by a habit of acting only by that which traps the feelings, is attached only to the outside and to the sparkle, without penetrating the solid part, pushed as he is besides to that by the spirit of darkness, which fearing that man (without being amused by the deceptive, or even by the sparkle of the truth) may reach the substance of this same truth, makes all its effort to prevent him. Men themselves and also nature seem to be opposed to it. The shifting, the darkness, the ramblings of the earth (earthquakes) which came with the death of Jesus Christ, marked the violent state of nature; not only because the author of nature was suffering, but in addition, because in dying for men he left them his spirit of truth. And so that they have penetrated the truth hidden in the mystery, he opens up his heart, as if to teach us to penetrate down to the very bottom of the truth.

I am not shocked by all that which gets up in order to prevent the truth from appearing in its substance; and this will be that disorder of all things, which will re-establish the whole order of it. The yearning to act through feelings, and prefer the exterior to the interior, is a pursuit or sin. However when (John 14:26, 16:13) the Spirit of truth is in a heart, he reveals to it this truth in all things. There is not, as I said, one story, one fable, one event in the ridiculous faith of the pagans, nor in the heresies, where one does not see a characteristic of the truth, and that which thrust them aside from this same truth in leaving the general order: in the laws, the customs even of the most barbarous, you see this truth everywhere: in the fable of the ancients, in the multiplicity of their Gods, what they attribute to them, all their deviations and their faults, are to me such a strong argument for the truth of our Religion, and of the spirit of Religion, which is the interior spirit, that through these same things one could teach them the truth. If the world is unleashed, if the men and the Demons are joined; they can cause some evil of exterior pain (punishment, sorrow); but unfailingly they will fall again into the order of God: they will even be used to establish it in appearing to destroy it, and my God will regenerate by my destruction.

Once again I submit generally all my Writings, as much the old ones as what I added here, to clarify them, protesting that I find myself in an entire resignation of spirit, of judgment, and of will for all the one will want to order me. Although it seems to me that I cannot doubt the kindnesses of God, and the experiences that he has had me go through: because they bring with them an ineffaceable character; and it would be lying to the Holy Spirit, if some fear or human regard prevent me from confessing it: I nevertheless never reflect on it, not even in order to write. I wrote what I wrote in entire ignorance; although I cannot doubt, in the way that I said, the kindnesses of God and my experiences, because they are of a nature so as to not leave doubt about them, I have nevertheless no certainly if I am worthy of love or of hate; but I leave both in him, who being all things to me, encloses all things for me. That if still more difficulties are found, I hope from the goodness of God that he will clarify them for me. As for what I wrote about me, I protest that I wrote it only to obey; and that I had first written more faults than virtues: I was made to burn it, by making me understand that there was in that a remainder of propriety: and it is true. I therefore wrote next in accordance with the command that I received, all which came to be with my pen writing away. Perhaps pride is mixed in with it, without me knowing, because of the great difficulty I have to reflect upon myself: but I can assure, and My God is the witness, that as much as it has been permitted for me to look at myself, I have had upon me only eyes of condemnation upon me, and even of horror: since I no longer see myself, it seems to me that I have eyes open only to God; so that one does not condemn nor approve, what one does not look at. This is what makes it so I have no difficulty in believing that I am bad when I am told; not that I see in particular of what that consists, nor that I can have any sorrow about it, because I find all goodness in my God, although it seems to be that an infidelity or an interval would be hell for me. Although my conscience reproaches me for no crime, I nevertheless do not believe myself justified for that. It is true that I do not reflect, and that I leave myself entirely to my God, to whom I gave myself for

the time and for eternity, without restriction or reserve, for his sole glory and his sole will: however I do not leave myself to be accused before his divine eyes of a thousand secret pursuits and faults, that he alone knows and that he alone can purify.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*

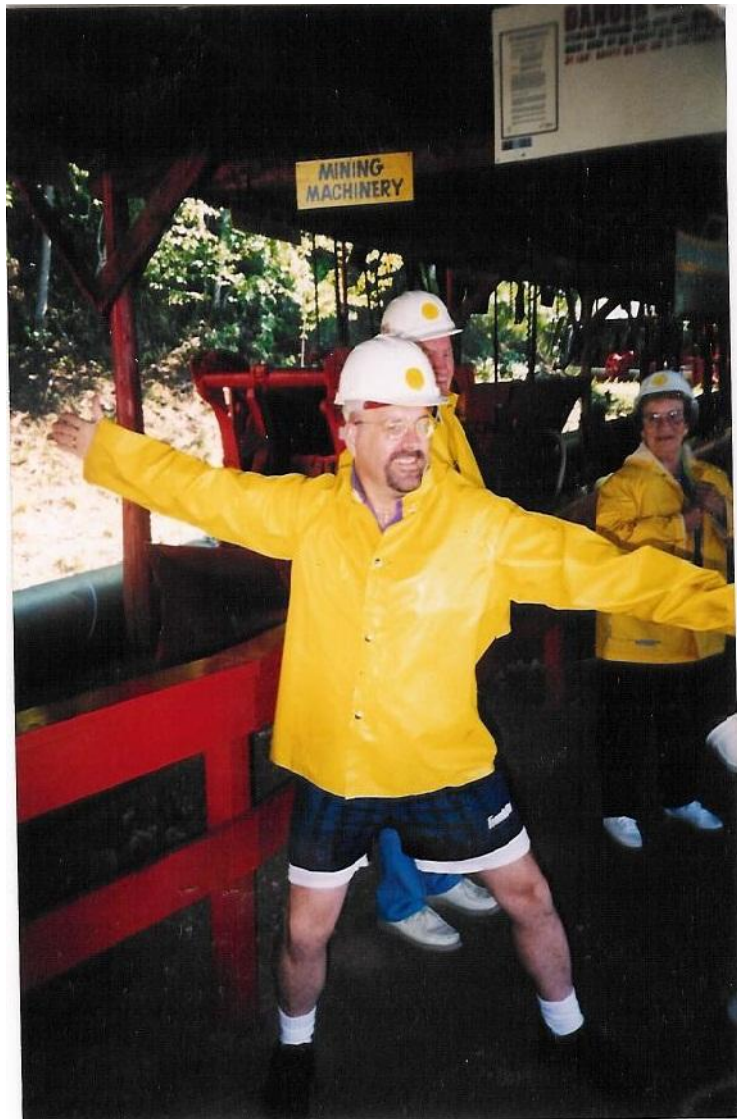
NON NOBIS, DOMINE, NON NOBIS, &C.

OMNIS HONOR ET GLORIA

DEO SOLI

Not unto us, Lord, not unto us,  
All glory and honor is yours  
Only God

(We have come to the end of this writing from Madame Guyon translated and edited into English. March 16, 2005 at 6:22 A.M.)



Peter-John Parisis on a Mining Trip for Gemstones